中国歷史博物館

MUSEUM OF CHINESE HISTORY

Explanatory Notes to Chinese History Exhibition

1976

Peking
Sunday 7 May 1978

The history of all hitherto existing society [that is, all *written* history — note by Engels] is the history of class struggles.

K. Marx and F. Engels:
Manifesto of the Communist Party

The class struggle necessarily leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

K. Marx:
Marx to J. Weydemeyer

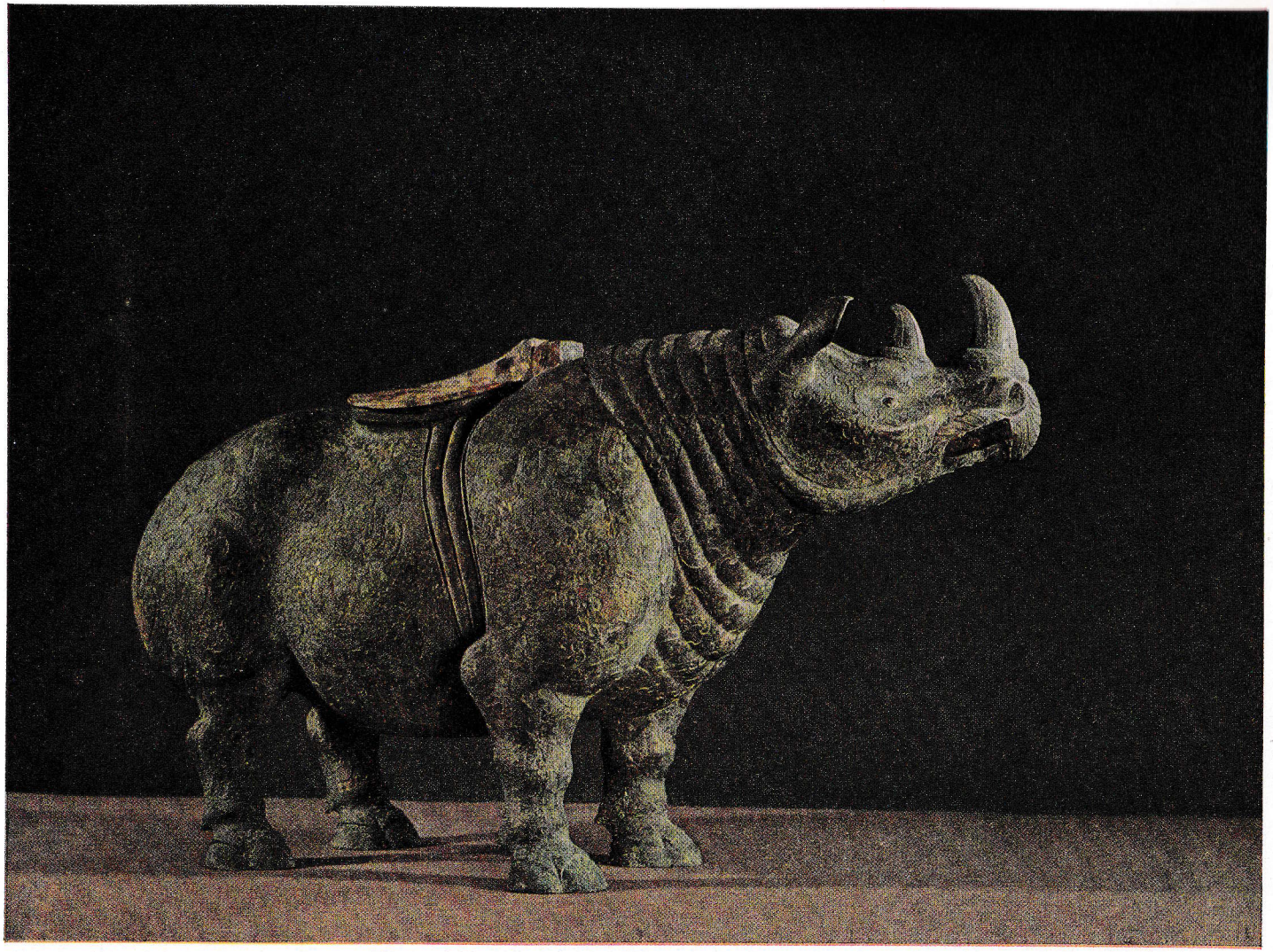
The history of all revolutions by the oppressed and exploited classes, against the exploiters, provides the basic material and source of our knowledge on the question of dictatorship.

V.I. Lenin:
A Contribution to the History of the Question of the Dictatorship

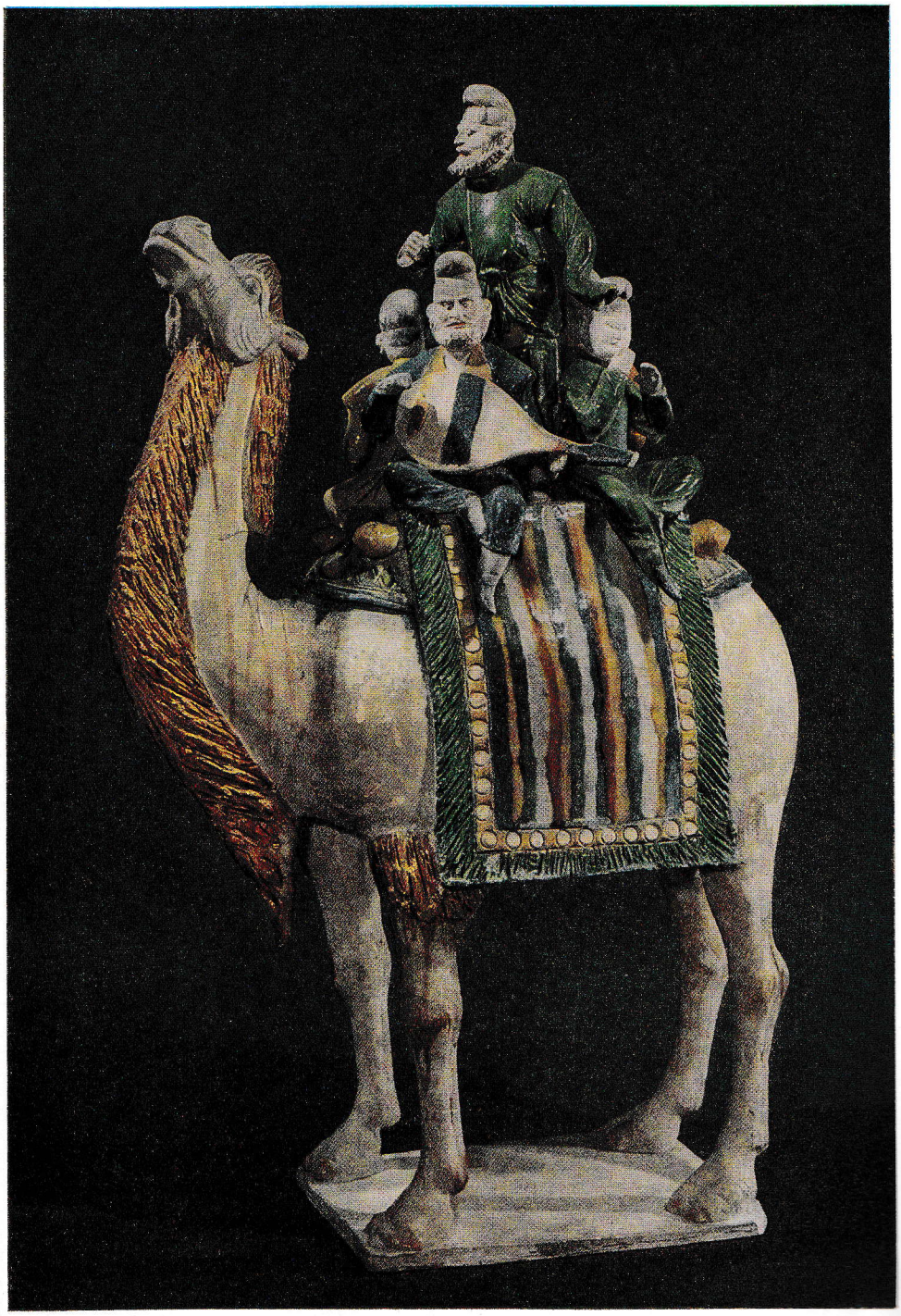
The people, and the people alone, are the motive force in the making of world history.

Mao Tsetung:
On Coalition Government

Pottery basin in colour with human face and fish designs, unearthed at Panpo Village in Sian, Shensi Province, in 1955.



Bronze *tsun*, a vessel inlaid with gold and silver in the shape of a rhinoceros wrought with cloud designs. (Western Han.) Unearthed at Hsingping County, Shensi Province, 1963.



Glazed pottery camel (Tang Dynasty), unearthed at Sian, Shensi, in 1957. On its back there is a dancer surrounded by four musicians.

MUSEUM OF CHINESE HISTORY

Explanatory Notes to Chinese History Exhibition

Chairman Mao teaches us that we must know **"not only the China of today but also the China of yesterday and of the day before yesterday."** The present-day class struggle is a continuation of the class struggle in history. Application of the Marxist stand, viewpoint and method to study Chinese history, reveal the laws of its development and sum up historical experience is of great importance for guiding the present-day struggle.

The exhibition covers the period from the primitive hordes one million years ago to the May Fourth Movement of 1919. It is divided into four parts: Primitive Society, Slave Society, Feudal Society, and Semi-Colonial and Semi-Feudal Society (the period of old-democratic revolution).

PRIMITIVE SOCIETY

(CIRCA 1,000,000 to 4,000 YEARS AGO)

Chairman Mao pointed out: **"From ancient times our forefathers have laboured, lived and multiplied on this vast territory."** Like other countries in the world, China passed through a primitive society without classes or exploitation.

Primitive hordes were the earliest form of organization of human society.

The Yuanmou Man, Lantian Man and Peking Man are primitive men discovered in China of a relatively early stage of human development. Two tooth fossils of Yuanmou Man discovered in the stratum of the later stage of the early Pleistocene epoch in Yuanmou County, Yunnan Province, in 1965 show that China was an important area of human activity one million years ago. Skull fossils of Lantian Man and the shaped stone implements unearthed in the stratum of the early stage of the mid-Pleistocene period in Lantian County, Shensi Province, in 1963 indicate that Lantian Man could already make tools. Fossils of Peking Man, who lived 400,000 to 500,000 years ago, have been unearthed at Choukoutien near Peking. Examination shows that although the skull remained relatively primitive, the limbs, especially the arms, were similar to those of modern man, and were formed by labour over a long period of time. This confirms the truth that "labour created man." Other remains of Peking Man include large quantities of stone implements, ashes and charred bones which show that he had learnt how to use fire and keep it burning, lived in groups, collected wild plants and hunted.

Matrilineal clan society emerged some 100,000 years ago. The remains of Mapa Man of Kwangtung Province, Tingtsun Man of Shansi Province and Changyang Man of Hupeh Province all show improvement in the making of stone implements and development of their gathering and hunting economies. The physical features of Liuchiang Man (Kwangsi Chuang Autonomous Region), Hotao Man (Inner Mongolian Autonomous Region) and Upper Cave Man (Choukoutien near Peking), who lived 20,000 to 30,000 years ago, are basically similar to those of modern man. They invented the technique of perforat-

ing and polishing horn and bone implements, among them, bone needles which they used to sew animal hides together for clothing. Stone arrowheads unearthed in Chihyu, Shansi Province, attest to the invention of the bow and arrow, which established hunting as a regular feature of their productive activities.

Primitive agriculture and animal husbandry developed 6,000-7,000 years ago. People by then could make pottery and had developed a primitive technique of spinning and weaving. Sculpture and painting in colours appeared. The symbols and marks cut on pottery may in all probability represent the earliest form of the Chinese written language.

Women played the major role in production in matrilineal clan society. Kinship was reckoned from the mother's side under a system of exogamy. With the mother known but not the father, the children belonged to the mother's clan. Ownership of the means of production by the clan commune, collective labour and shared consumption were the basic principles of socio-economic life.

Development of the productive forces brought about gradual elevation in the position of men in production, and resulted in the emergence of patrilineal clan society about 5,000 years ago. At that time sharpened sticks and stone spades were used for turning up the soil, stone sickles for harvesting. Grain unearthed in different parts of the country show that millet was the main crop in the north, paddy rice in the south. Livestock breeding witnessed new advances with the raising of pigs, dogs, cattle and sheep. When surpluses in agriculture and animal husbandry began to accrue, the practice of private appropriation of surplus products arose. The development of specialized handicrafts such as smelting copper and making pottery led to the division of production along two major lines: agriculture and handicrafts. Commodity exchange gradually become more frequent and regular. Animals, implements and ornaments, which were in widespread use as commodities, also served as currency. Social division of labour and commodity exchange accelerated the development of private ownership.

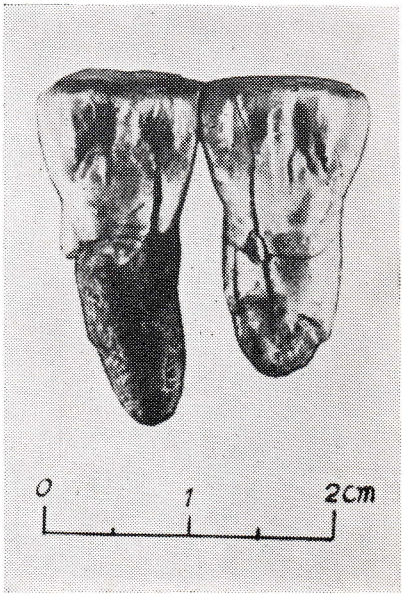
As men assumed an increasingly important role in production and society, they gained control over property. In order to preserve it and hand it on to their own children, they abolished the system of exogamy which prevailed in matrilineal clan society, and instead, the man took in a woman from another clan as his wife and enforced a system of male lineage with the right of inheritance from the father. The communal life of the patrilineal clan is reflected in the remains of a long row of dwellings unearthed at Hsiawangkang, Hsichuan County, Honan Province, and also by a tomb, in which husband and wife were buried together, excavated at Tawenkou, in the area of Taian, Shantung Province.

Marx pointed out: **"The existence of classes is only bound up with particular historical phases in the development of production."** The development

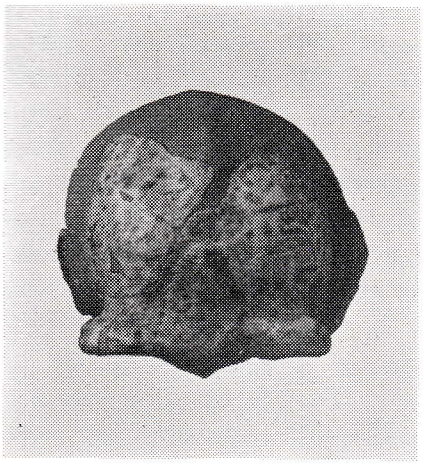
of private ownership, the emergence of individual production and the polarization into rich and poor among clan members resulted in the rise of antagonistic classes in society and the start of the disintegration of primitive society. The tribal chiefs, military leaders and religious priests used their power to acquire more slaves and property holdings. They passed their lives in extravagance and luxury, and after death, were expensively buried, while their concubines or women slaves were often entombed together with them as human sacrifices. As they unleashed predatory wars from time to time for the purpose of increasing their private property, several tribes would form a confederation to safeguard their common interests in war and defence. This was the eve of the emergence of the state.

The remains and the artifacts of primitive communities have been found in large numbers in China's southeast coastal areas, the southeastern part of the country and the northern border areas. Cultural achievements in various parts of the country show that the culture of the central plains had a marked influence on the border areas, and that the forefathers of the people of various nationalities jointly created China's ancient history.

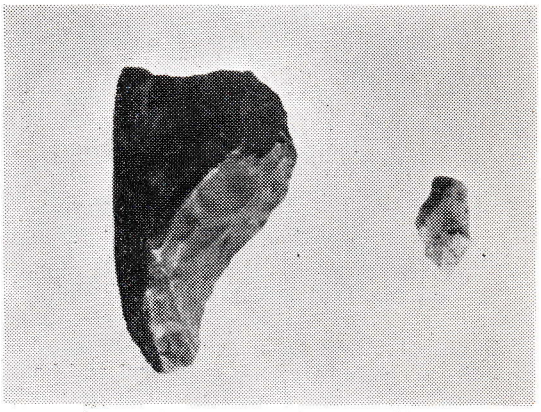
Primitive men shaping implements. Sculpture.



Tooth fossils of Yuanmou Man.



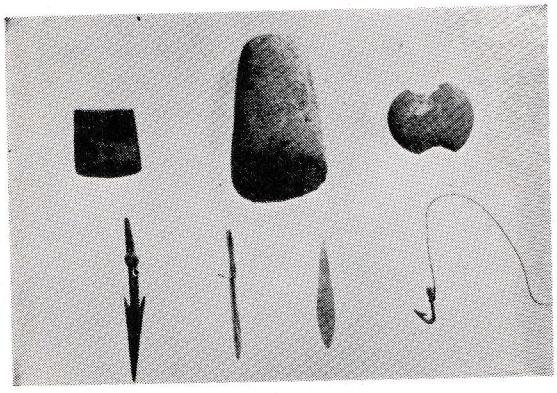
Skull fossil of Peking Man. Unearthed at Choukoutien near Peking in 1966.



Stone chopping-tool and stone scraper used by Peking Man. Unearthed at Choukoutien, near Peking, in 1958.

Lantian Man. (restoration.)

Grey pottery *tsun*, a vessel bearing inscrip
tions on the body, belonging to the perio
of patrilineal clan commune. Unearthed a
Chuhsien County, Shantung Province, i
1960.



Stone axe, stone adze, stone net sinkers, bone fish-ing-fork, bone fish-hook, bone awl and bone arrow-head used in the period of matrilineal clan commune. Unearthed at Panpo Village in Sian, Shensi Province, in 1955.

SLAVE SOCIETY

(21ST CENTURY—476 B.C.)

Engels pointed out: **"Slavery was the first form of exploitation, peculiar to the world of antiquity."** Slave society in China was already formed by the time of the Hsia Dynasty more than 4,000 years ago. It continued through the Shang and Western Chou Dynasties, gradually approaching its collapse in the Spring and Autumn Period.

The Hsia Dynasty was the formative period of the slave state. The strengthening of private ownership, the extension of predatory wars and the irreconcilability of contradictions among the various classes led to the emergence of the slave state and the hereditary system of accession to the throne. **"The introduction of slavery under the conditions prevailing at that time was a great step forward."** The slave system in ancient times made possible the social division of labour on a larger scale, creating conditions for economic and cultural advance. Agricultural development called for the building of water conservancy works and this need was reflected in the legendary flood-control project of Emperor Yu. During the Hsia Dynasty there were still many tribes on Chinese territory, some of them already displaying the rudiments of statehood.

The Shang Dynasty was the developmental period of slave society. Excavations of a Shang city in Chengchow uncovered the remains of palaces inside the city, with bronze casting and pottery handicraft workshops outside the city. This demonstrates that cities — centres of the rule of Shang slave-owners — had appeared, together with the antithesis between city and countryside. Precisely as Marx and Engels said, this was **"the greatest division of material and mental labour."** The palace sites and the bronze weapons of the Shang Dynasty discovered in Anyang, Honan Province, as well as relevent oracle-bone inscriptions, show that relatively complete state structure and army already existed.

Back-breaking slave labour brought about fairly rapid progress in Shang Dynasty's agriculture and handicrafts. The ideographs for "wheat," "millet"

and "crop" appearing in oracle-bone inscriptions and the large number of exhumed wine vessels among the bronzes are evidence of the increase in variety and output of farm crops. Calculations of the calendar which had a bearing on agriculture also made headway. China was the first country in the world to raise silkworms and weave silk. Diggings in Anyang, Honan Province, uncovered the remains of silkworms carved in jade and silk fabrics, which show that the Shang sericulture and silk weaving of more than 3,000 years ago was fairly advanced. Bronze-casting was an important branch of Shang handicraft industry. The bronze Ssu-mu-wu *ting*, a sacrificial vessel weighing 875 kilogrammes, is the heaviest bronze vessel ever discovered. The casting of the *tsun* (wine vessel) in the shape of the dragon and tiger and the *tsun* ornamented with four ramheads called for a very high technical level. It was in this period that proto-porcelain made its appearance. Commodity exchange also developed. Among the Shang ruins at Anyang are tortoise shells, whale bones and cowry shells from the South China Sea and the East China Sea. They reveal that the slave-owning aristocrats of the Shang Dynasty had established trade relations not only with the surrounding areas but with far distant regions as well.

The written language came into fairly extensive use during the later Shang period. Inscriptions on pottery, bronze vessels and, in particularly large numbers, on oracle bones testify that writing had reached a mature stage.

Slavery is one of the cruellest and most brutal systems of exploitation in human history. Slave-holders owned not only the means of production but the producers themselves. Slaves could be bought, sold and killed at will like animals. In the large tomb of a slave-owner exhumed in Wukuan Village, Anyang, 79 slaves were found buried as human sacrifices. In another gigantic tomb discovered in Yitu, Shantung Province, 48 slaves were buried together with the slave-owner. Where there is oppression there is resistance. In the Battle of Muyeh, King Wu of Chou launched an attack against King Chou of Shang and the latter's armed slaves sent to the front revolted, joined the Chou army and helped overthrow the Shang Dynasty.

Western Chou represented slave society's highest stage of development. By granting fiefs and setting up a hierarchy, the slave-owning class succeeded in strengthening their regime and widening their sphere of political influence. They enforced the "nine square" system of land allotment and brought the craftsmen and merchants under government control as a means of intensifying their exploitation of the slaves and the common people. In order to maintain their class rule, they devised a complete set of rituals and music. Through the use of collective slave labour on a large scale, more grain was produced than in the Shang Dynasty. Bronze vessels, made in greater number and variety, now bore fairly long inscriptions recording events. In architecture, flat tiles were made by the labouring people.

The oppression suffered by Western Chou slaves was staggering. The inscription on the Yu *ting* records that a king of Chou on one occasion present-

ed a gift of 1,709 slaves to a nobleman named Yu. According to the inscription on the *ting* marked "Hu" five slaves were equal in value to one horse plus a hank of silk. Towards the end of Western Chou the slave-owning aristocrats' tyrannical rule set off revolts of the common people which hastened the end of the dynasty.

The transition from slavery to the feudal system began in the Spring and Autumn Period. With the decline of the House of Chou, some ducal states grew stronger on the basis of local economic development. As the "rites were lost and music was ruined," they plunged into a fight for supremacy. This historical situation is well illustrated by a *kuei* container of the Duke of Chin, a big bronze water-vat belonging to King Fu Cha of Wu and the *pien chung*, a chime of bronze bells unearthed from the tomb of Marquis Tsai, all of which were made in the vassal states.

More extensive use of iron implements and of oxen for ploughing made for increased productivity. Outside the boundaries of the "nine square" system of land allotment, some slave-owners and the common people reclaimed wasteland and turned it into their private land. This undermined the system and led to its disintegration. In the meantime, heightened commodity exchange gave rise to a metal socketed spade-shaped money.

With the development of the productive forces, the relations of production under slavery became a hindrance to social development. Slave uprisings which broke out in many ducal states hit hard at the reactionary rule of the slave-owning class and propelled history forward. The slave revolt led by Liuhsia Chih, who had 9,000 followers, spread over wide areas from south to north. Their "fame dazzling like the sun and the moon," the rebellion left an indelible impression on the labouring people.

On the basis of slave uprisings and the common people's revolts, the newly-emerging landlord class launched struggles to wrest power from the slave-owning aristocrats. Unearthed at Houma, Shansi Province, the pacts of alliance concluded by Chao Yang, representative of the newly-emerging landlord class of the State of Tsin, at a conference presided over by him, reflect the sharpening class struggle in the State of Tsin during the period of transition from slavery to the feudal system.

Confucius went about peddling his reactionary political programme "restrain oneself and return to the rites," obstinately trying to preserve the slave system. The labouring people of that time repudiated him as ignorant of the trend of events, as a chap who "could not do phyiscal work or tell the difference between the five grain crops." Liuhsia Chih drove home the point when he pointed out that Confucius, in exalting the ancient kings and seeking restoration, was a gangster guilty of heinous crimes. In his sharp struggle against Confucius, Shaocheng Mao, advocate of reform and forerunner of the Legalists, sounded a prelude to the protracted struggle between thte Confucianists and the Legalists in the days to come.

Bronze Ssu-mu-wu *ting*, a cauldron of the Shang Dynasty. A sacrificial object offered by King Wen Ting to his mother Wu. Unearthed at Anyang, Honan Province, in 1939.

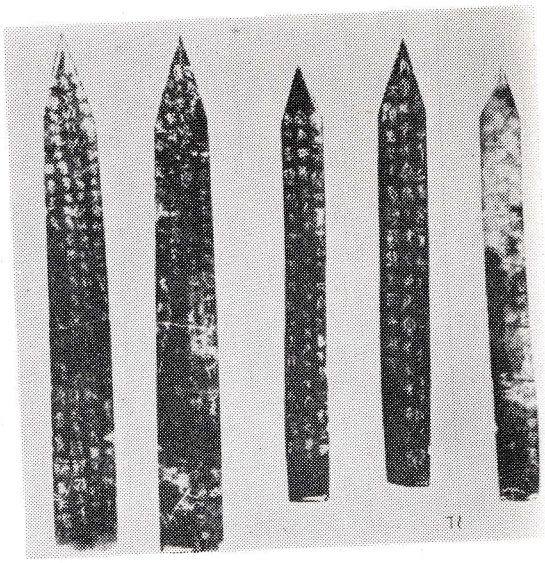
Oracle bone with the inscription: The slaveowner supervises as a group of slaves cultivate the land. (Reign of King Wu Ting, Shang Dynasty) Unearthed at Anyang, Honan Province, during the Kuang Hsu reign of the Ching Dynasty.

Bronze food container of the Marquis of Yen. (Western Chou Dynasty) Its discovery in present-day Liaoning Province indicates that this area was Marquis of Yen's fief granted to him by the King of Chou in the early Western Chou period. Unearthed in Katsuo, Liaoning Province, in 1955.

Bronze Yu *ting* (Western Chou Dynasty), a tripod with an inscription of 291 words inside recording the bestowal of 1,709 slaves by King Kang of Western Chou to a nobleman named Yu. Unearthed at Meihsien County, Shensi Province, during the Tao Kuang reign of the Ching Dynasty.

Uprising led by Liuhsia Chih in bas-relief. Created in 1974.

Bronze *kuei* container of the Duke of Chin made during the reign of Duke Ching of the State of Chin in the Spring and Autumn Period. Unearthed at Tienshui, Kansu Province, in 1917.



Pacts of sworn alliance entered into by the State of Tsin in the Spring and Autumn Period. The documents indicate the armed struggle carried out by Chao Yang for seizing power after 497 B.C. Unearthed at Houma, Shansi Province, in 1965.

FEUDAL SOCIETY

(475 B.C.—1840 A.D.)

From the Warring States Period to the outbreak of the Opium War, China was a feudal society.

The principal contradiction in feudal society was between the peasantry and the landlord class. The latter owned most of the land in the country and lived on rent extorted from the peasants. With the power of the feudal state in their hands the landlords enslaved and repressed the peasants. The true motive force for historical development in feudal society was the peasant class struggle, peasant uprisings and peasant wars. From the last years of the Chin Dynasty to the Ming and Ching Dynasties, there were hundreds of great and small peasant uprisings. **"The scale of peasant uprisings and peasant wars in Chinese history has no parallel anywhere else."** Each of the fairly large peasant revolutionary struggles struck at the feudal regime of the time, hence more or less furthered the growth of the social productive forces.

"The peasants and the handicraft workers were the basic classes which created the wealth and culture" of feudal society. The economy and culture in Chinese feudal period developed continuously, and many of the creations and inventions were important contributions to the development of world history.

The struggle between the Legalists and the Confucianists from the Warring States Period to the middle of the Western Han Dynasty was a struggle between the newly-emerging landlord class and the forces of restoration represented by the slave-owners. Following the middle of the Western Han, this struggle took the form of reformism as opposed to conservatism, unity as opposed to division, within the landlord class itself.

Since the Chin and Han Dynasties, unity of the state has been the main current of historical development. The joint struggles waged by the people of various nationalities, particularly the joint struggle against external aggressive forces in the Ming and Ching periods, made possible the continuous development and consolidation of our unified multi-national country.

During the Ming and Ching periods, the beginnings of capitalism appeared and the feudal system declined. From the mid-19th century on, as a result of the incursions of foreign capitalism, China step by step changed into a semi-colonial and semi-feudal society.

FORMATION OF THE FEUDAL SYSTEM

(Warring States Period)

(475 B.C.—221 B.C.)

The Period of the Warring States witnessed great social upheavals in which the system of slavery was replaced by feudalism.

The unremitting struggle waged by the slaves and the common people from the Spring and Autumn Period onwards rocked the rule of the slave-owning class and brought about division within the ruling class. The House of Tien seized power in the State of Chi and three houses dismembered the State of Tsin. They opened the path to seizure of state power by the newly emerging landlord class in the various dukedoms. The new rulers used their power to carry out reforms and large-scale changes in the system of ownership. By virtue of the reforms initiated by Shang Yang in the State of Chin, the nine square system of land allotment was abolished and a policy emphasizing farming and warfare was enforced. Violence was used to crush the reactionary forces of the slave-owners. Shang Yang's reforms, which were more thoroughgoing than those introduced in other ducal states, laid a foundation for the subsequent unification of China by the State of Chin. Relics of the period such as the rectangular measuring vessel, halberds and the *tun* (metal ring with a sharp point fixed at the end of the long handle of a weapon) made during the Shang Yang reforms, Hsiangpang swords, Shangchun lances, lances of the magistrate of Kaotu, and a transit permit issued to Ngo Chun Chi are substantial evidences of the reforms, the enforcement of the system of prefectures and counties, the strengthening of royal feudal power and the exercise of the dictatorship of the landlord class.

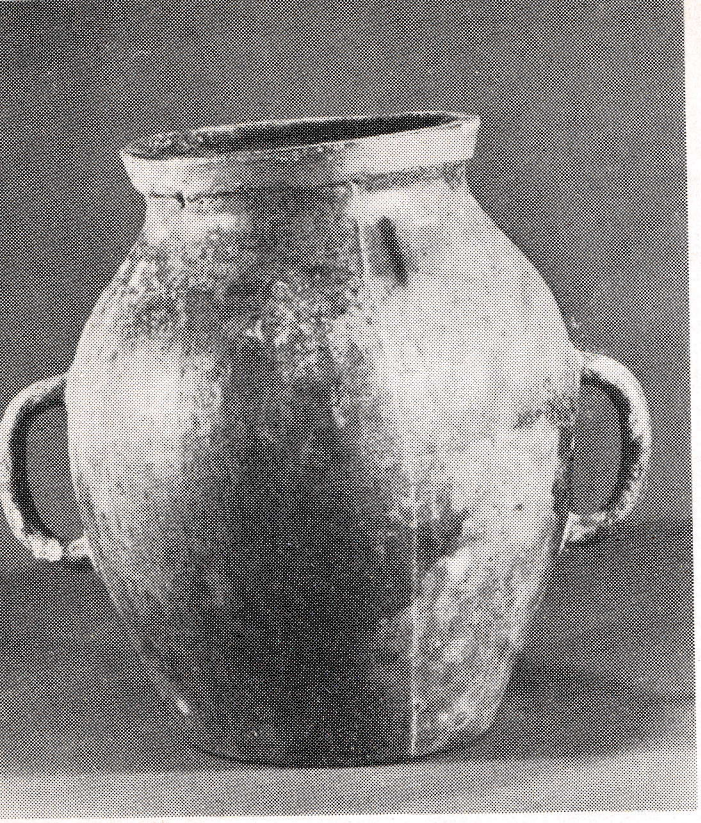
While the feudal system was in the process of formation, the declining slave-owning aristocrats made desperate efforts to stage a come-back. The masses of people were a mighty force in the struggle against restoration. Chuang Chiao's uprising in the State of Chu dealt the slave-owning restorationist forces crushing blows. Seizure of power versus counter-seizure of power and restoration versus counter-restoration were issues over which the

newly emerging landlord class and the declining slave-owning class became locked in a fierce struggle. The Legalists Hsun Kuang and Han Fei advocated "following later kings," and upheld centralized power and rule of law. They called for the use of violence to crush the resistance of the slave-owning restorationist forces, and sharply criticized the preachings of the Confucianist representative Mencius who favoured "following ancient kings" and "exercising benevolent rule" aimed at preserving the dictatorship of the slave-owners. In the ideological sphere, "a hundred schools of thought contended," with Confucianists and Legalists as the main contestants. Each of the schools had its own representatives and written works. Among the relics unearthed from a Han tomb in Mawangtui, Changsha, are transcriptions on silk of *Lao Tzu* and other books which are invaluable for studying the history of thought in the pre-Chin period.

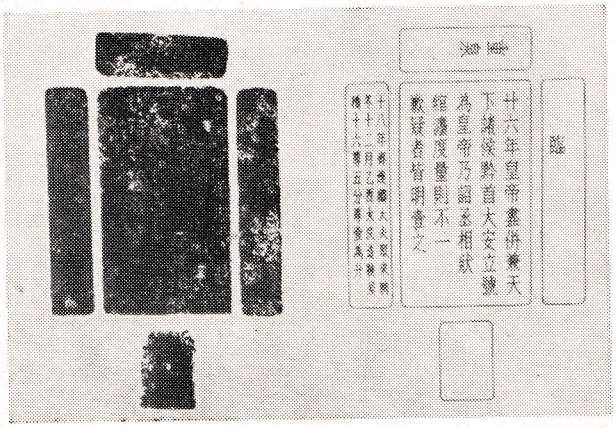
Establishment of the new feudal system was an impetus to the economic and cultural development of society. Iron moulds unearthed in Hsinglung County, Hopei Province, as well as iron farm tools and iron implements discovered in other parts of the country show that iron objects were in extensive use at that time. This provided favourable conditions for reclaiming land on a large scale, building water conservancy projects and improving farming techniques. Important water conservancy works built during this period included the Tuchiang Dam and the Chengkuo and Hsimenpao irrigation canals. Mining equipment and pit props unearthed in Tunglushan, Tayeh County, Hupeh Province, indicate that mining was on a fairly large scale and had reached a considerable level of technique. Lacquer ware, metal vessels, silk fabrics and hempen materials of the finest workmanship, unearthed in Hunan, Hupeh and Honan Provinces, testify to the great ingenuity of the labouring people. The celebrated craftsman Lu Pan has been admired by people for generations.

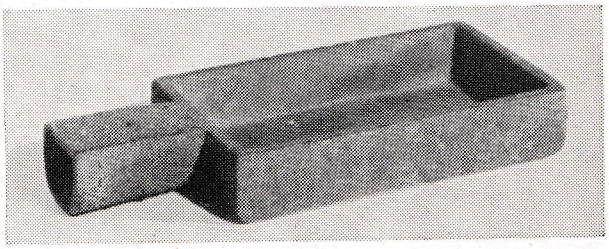
New developments in commerce and city construction took place in the early period after the feudal system superseded slavery. These can be seen in the metal currency and weights and measures of the various ducal states, and the bricks, tiles and drainage pipes discovered at the sites of Hsiatu of the State of Yen and other cities.

Science, literature and art made big advances in this period of great social upheavals. To mention a few, there are the works of the outstanding poet Chu Yuan of the State of Chu, the famous physician Pien Chueh's technique of feeling the pulse, as well as achievements in astronomy and painting.

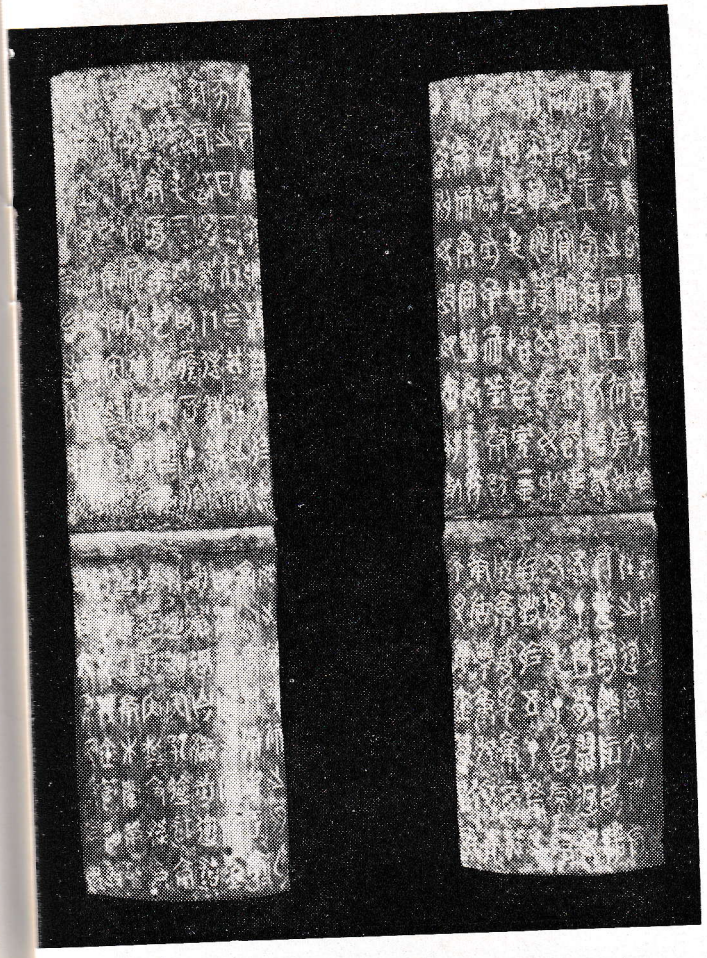


Bronze *fu* of Tzu Ho Tzu (Warring States Period), a standard measure cast under the supervision of Tien Ho Tzu, representative of the newly emerging landlord class of the State of Chi. It signifies the strengthening of landlord class rule after the House of Tien seized power in the State of Chi. Unearthed at Chiaohsien County, Shantung Province, in 1857.

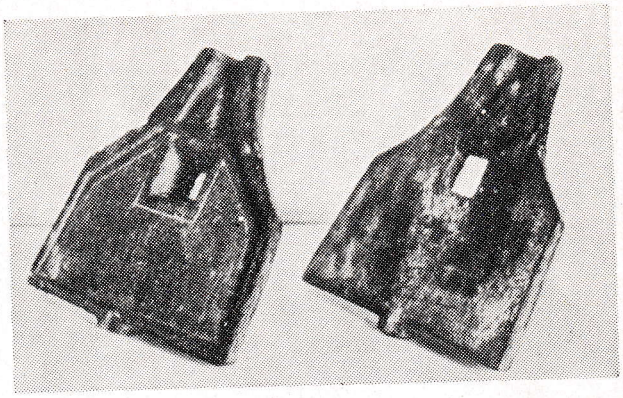




Standard bronze rectangular measuring vessel (Warring States Period) prescribed during the Shang Yang in 344 B.C., the 18th year of the reign of Duke Hsiao of the State of Chin. Inscriptions appeared on its sides. After Chin Shih Huang unified the six states, its use was enforced throughout the country. Chin Shih Huang's edict for standardizing weights and measures is engraved at the base.

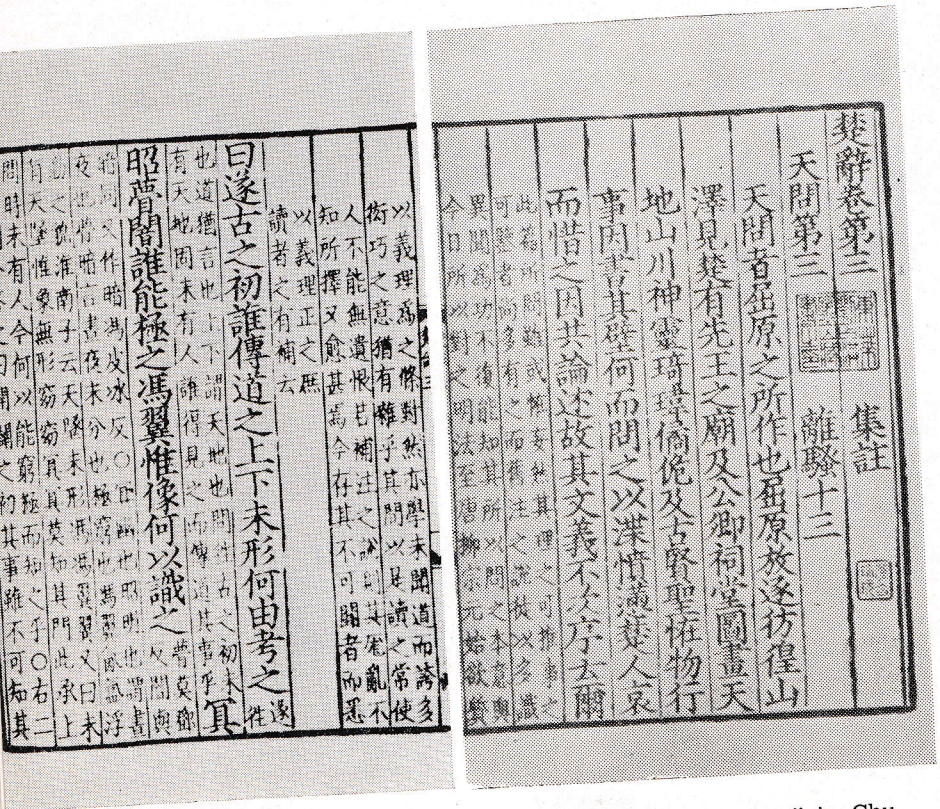


Cast-copper transit permits with gold inlay (Warring States Period), issued to Ngo Chun Chi by Prince Huai of the State of Chu. They stipulate the quantity of goods a carriage or ship is permitted to carry, designate the transportation route and grant exemption from custom duties to the holder. Their use indicates the strengthening of feudal rulers. Unearthed at Shouhsien County, Anhwei Province, in 1957.



Iron moulds for casting hoes and sickles. (Warring States Period) The use of metal moulds increased efficiency in the production of iron implements during the Warring States Period. Unearthed at Hsinglung County, Hopei Province, in 1953.

Carved wooden screen coated with coloured lacquer. (Warring States Period) Unearthed at Chiangling County, Hupeh Province, in 1965.



楚辭卷第三　集註　雜騷十三

天問第三

天問者屈原之所作也屈原放逐彷徨山澤見楚有先王之廟及公卿祠堂圖畫天地山川神靈琦瑋僪佹及古賢聖怪物行事因書其壁何而問之以渫憤懣楚人哀而惜之因其論述故其文義不次序云爾

Photo-copy of one of Chu Yuan's representative works "Tien Wen" in Chu Tzu. (Wood-block printing of the Southern Sung Dynasty) In this essay the author questions the traditional concepts of the slave-owning class in regard to the universe, nature and history. This work holds an important position in the history of Chinese philosophy and that of Chinese literature.

Painting on silk (Warring States Period), showing a human figure riding a dragon, one of the earliest discovered in China. The lines are natural, the figure drawn accurately and in proportion, demonstrating the artistic ability of the craftsmen of the time. Unearthed at Changsha, Hunan Province, in 1973.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE UNIFIED MULTI-NATIONAL FEUDAL STATE

(Chin and Han Dynasties)

(221 B.C. — 220 A.D.)

The existence of separatist ducal states hindered economic and cultural development of society. At the close of the Warring States Period unification became an inevitable historical trend.

Advancing with the tide of history and pursuing a Legalist line, Chin Shih Huang, outstanding statesman of the newly emerging landlord class, brought about the unification of China and established the first multi-national feudal state with a centralized government. He strengthened the dictatorship of the landlord class, carried out a series of social reforms on a nation-wide scale and further consolidated and developed the feudal system of land ownership. The numerous tall, spirited pottery figures of warriors and horses unearthed in the eastern side of Chin Shih Huang's mausoleum mirror the magnificence and splendour of the wars of unification conducted by the newly emerging landlord class of the time. Important cultural relics of this period include a rock at Langya bearing the emperor's inscriptions, a tally in the shape of a tiger entrusted to the commanding officer of Yang Ling, bricks inscribed with the words: "Every one in the domain is a subject of the Emperor," *pan liang* coins and steel-yard weights and measuring vessels on which the inscription of Chin Shih Huang's edict for standardizing weights and measures was inlaid or engraved.

The Chin Dynasty imposed onerous corvee service. The death of Chin Shih Huang precipitated a seizure of power by the restorationist forces and a rapid sharpening of class contradictions. The first great peasant uprising in Chinese history, led by Chen Sheng and Wu Kuang, broke out, culminating in the establishment of the Chang Chu revolutionary political power. It led to the overthrow of the Chin Dynasty and dealt a body blow to feudal rule as well as to the slave-owning restorationist forces. **"The class struggles of the peasants, the peasant uprisings and peasant wars constituted the real**

motive force of historical development in Chinese feudal society." The name of the State of Chang Chu is recorded in a book unearthed from a Han tomb at Mawangtui, Changsha. The work, entitled *Wu Hsing Chan*, consists of manuscripts written on silk, dealing with astronomy and the calendar.

Towards the end of the Chin Dynasty, on the basis of massive peasant revolts which rolled on like tidal waves, Liu Pang founded the Han Dynasty. The rulers continued to implement the Legalist line during the earlier period of the Western Han Dynasty, striking unremitting blows at the remnant power of the slave-owners and the local separatist forces. During the reign of Emperor Wu, the dynasty grew much stronger politically and economically. In large-scale military campaigns, the emperor repulsed incursions into the inland made by the Hsiung Nu slave-owning aristocrats from the northern part of China. This ensured further consolidation and development of the unified multi-national feudal state with centralized power. During the reign of Emperor Hsun, a military and political organization was set up in Hsi Yu (the Western Region) to control the vast areas lying east and south of what is today Lake Balkhash. Sealing clay on which the seal of the official of Chi in charge of iron-working is affixed and wu chu coins are reminiscent of the state management of salt and iron and the government control of minting in the Han Dynasty. Lumps of coal excavated from the sites of iron-smelting workshops in Kunghsien County, Honan Province, show that coal was already used in metallurgy more than 2,000 years ago. The big ploughshares discovered in Liaoyang, Liaoning Province, and the pottery windmills found in Chiyuan County, Honan Province, are indications of the advances in agricultural production and the improved technique of processing grain. The artistic level of the beautiful silk fabrics and exquisite lacquerware of the time exceeds that of any of the previous dynasties.

After the middle of the Western Han Dynasty the contradictions between the restorationist forces of slave-owners and the landlord class was relegated to a subordinate position, while the contradictions between the landlord class and the peasantry steadily sharpened. Emperor Yuan began to pursue a political line that worshipped Confucianism and opposed Legalism, and advocated the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius recast and modified by Tung Chung-shu. The social crisis deepened and land annexations became more rampant. This set off the peasant uprisings of Lulin, the Red Eyebrows and the Bronze Horses which overthrew the Western Han Dynasty.

Large-scale peasant uprisings promoted the development of the social productive forces of Eastern Han. A graphic record of the agriculture and the handicraft industry of that time is preserved on stone reliefs depicting ploughing with oxen, iron-smelting, spinning and weaving. These have been unearthed in Kiangsu, Shantung and Shensi Provinces.

During the Eastern Han period, the despotic landlord forces grew rapidly. A miniature of life on the huge manorial estates is preserved in relics of the time. Stone reliefs found in Mihsien County, Honan Province, show land-

lords collecting rent; stone reliefs unearthed in Yinan County, Shantung Province, picture a festive occasion at a landlord's manor-house; and pottery fortresses, pavilions, horses, carriages, granaries and figurines labouring at all sorts of tasks round out the picture.

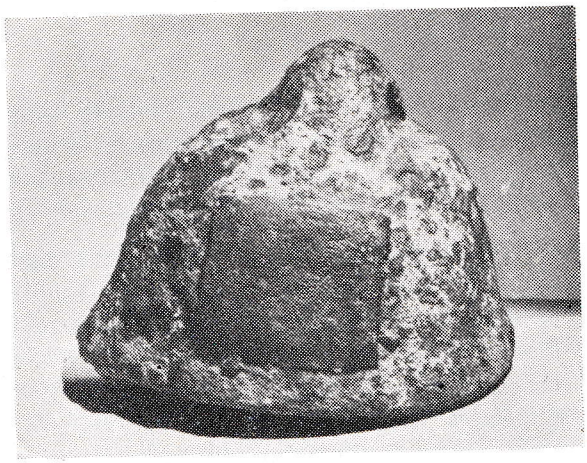
Eastern Han rulers mixed Confucian ideas with the superstition advocated by sorcerers and used the "three cardinal guides and five constant virtues" to tighten up ideological control over the peasantry. The manuscripts of the Five Classics carved in stone during the Hsi Ping reign of Eastern Han provide evidence showing the Eastern Han rulers' worship of Confucius. Wang Chung, a thinker of simple materialism, denounced Confucius and Mencius and scathingly criticized their doctrines as well as the belief in necromancy prevalent at the time.

Towards the end of the Eastern Han Dynasty, a fully prepared, well-organized peasant revolt broke out, the Yellow Turbans Uprising. The army of insurrection, holding high the militant banner of "Death to the Han Dynasty, power to the peasant state!" spearheaded its attack at the reactionary regime of Eastern Han, shaking the dynasty to its foundations.

The people of the various nationalities in the Han Dynasty forged ever closer relations. Cultural relics of China's nationalities in the north, northeast, northwest, south and southwest are found together with those of the Han nationality, indicating the strengthened political, economic and cultural ties of the various nationalities of China.

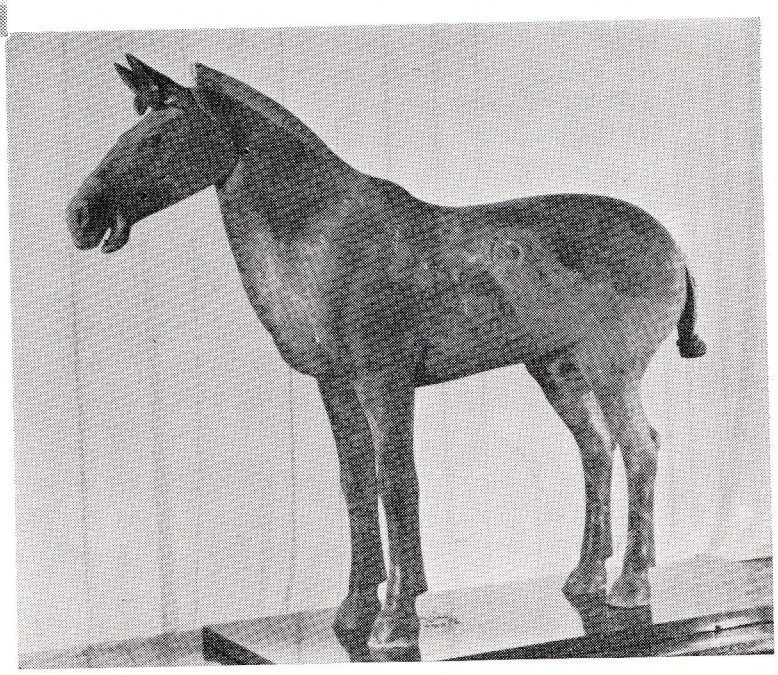
The Han Dynasty witnessed many scientific and cultural achievements. Western Han paper unearthed at Pachiao in Sian is the earliest plant-fibre paper ever discovered in the world. The seismograph invented by Chang Heng, the treatise on typhoid fever entitled *Shang Han Lun* by the physician Chang Chung-ching, Hua Tuo's use of anaesthetics in surgical operation and Szuma Chien's *Shih Chi (Historical Records)* hold an important position in the world history of science and culture. Outstanding handicraft works of the labouring people of the time include a bronze vessel in the shape of a rhinoceros, pottery figure of a story-teller, galloping bronze horse on a flying bird and a gilded bronze figurine with a lamp from the Changhsin Palace.

During the Chin and Han Dynasties friendly contacts with the people of neighbouring countries increased. The famous Silk Road stretching to the far-flung eastern Mediterranean was opened in the Han Dynasty.



Iron weight of the Chin Dynasty weighing 32.5 kilogrammes and inlaid with a copper plate bearing Chin Shih Huang's edict for standardizing weights and measures issued in the 26th year of his reign. Unearthed at Tsoyun County, Shansi Province, in 1956.

A pottery warrior and a pottery horse. (Chin Dynasty) Unearthed at Lintung, Shensi Province, in 1974.



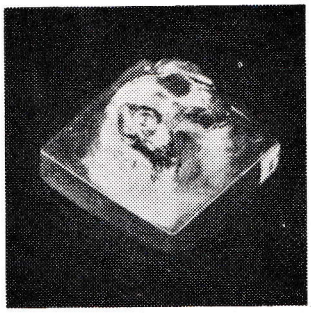
Section devoted to the great peasant uprising led by Chen Sheng and Wu Kuang.

Silk fabric. (Western Han) Unearthed from a Western Han tomb at Mawangtui, Changsha, Hunan Province, in 1972.

Lacquerware. (Western Han) Unearthed from a Western Han tomb at Mawangtui, Changsha, Hunan Province, in 1972.

Copper seal of a Chiang chief who submitted to the rule of the Han Dynasty. (Western Han) This offers historical evidence that the government of the Han Dynasty issued seals to the heads of the various nationalities in Hsi Yu (the Western Region), ranging from kings and marquises down to town heads, as recorded in the "Chronicle of the Western Region" in *Han Shu (History of the Western Han Dynasty.)* Unearthed at Shaya, Sinkiang, in 1953.

Copper seal of a Hsiung Nu chief who submitted to the rule of the Han Dynasty. (Eastern Han) Unearthed at Tatung County, Chinghai Province, in 1973.



Seal of the King of Tien (present-day Yunnan). (Western Han) Unearthed at Chinning County, Yunnan Province, in 1956.

Bronze seismograph (reconstructed model) invented by Chang Heng in Loyang in 132 A.D., the first year of the Yang Chia reign of the Eastern Han Dynasty. It is the earliest seismograph in the world, and can register the force of 1-2 degree earthquakes not otherwise perceptible.

Stone relief rubbing of an iron workshop. (Eastern Han) Unearthed at Tenghsien County, Shantung Province, in 1930.

Copy of a stone relief showing a landlord collecting rent. (Eastern Han) Unearthed in Mihsien County, Honan Province, in 1960.

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THE SOUTH AND AMALGAMATION OF VARIOUS NATIONALITIES IN THE NORTH

(The Three Kingdoms, Western Tsin, Eastern Tsin and Southern and Northern Dynasties)

(220—589 A.D.)

The revolutionary storm of the uprising of the Yellow Turbans brought about the disintegration of the Eastern Han Dynasty. Various landlord armed forces, after suppressing the revolt, occupied different areas and fought one another. Tsao Tsao, Chuko Liang and Sun Chuan, carrying out the Legalist line, unified the north, southwest and southeast part of the country respectively. This brought into being the Three Kingdoms — Wei, Shu and Wu.

On the devastation wrought by rival warlords, the labouring people of various nationalities reclaimed wasteland and built water conservancy works. In this way they restored and promoted social production. Iron ware unearthed in Mienchih, Honan Province, and celadon ware unearthed in Nanking illustrate the development of agriculture and handicrafts in the period of the Three Kingdoms.

Taiwan has since ancient times been part of the territory of China. In 230 A.D. the Wu government sent ten thousand men to Yichow, as Taiwan was then called, to help develop the island.

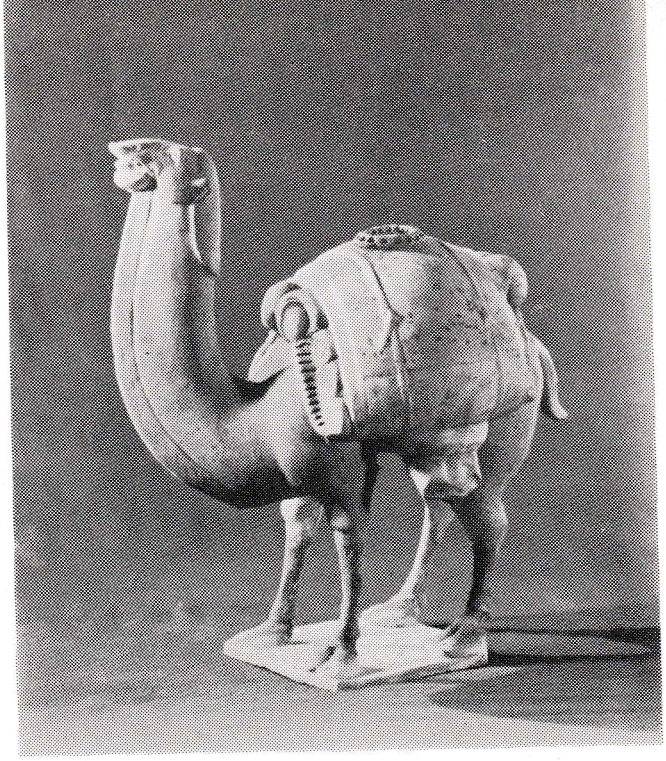
The Western Tsin achieved a short-term unification, with political power in the hands of powerful aristocrats. Pottery tomb figures of attendants and warriors excavated in Changsha show that these landlord-aristocrats kept peasant dependants and maintained private troops known as *pu chu*. The dark rule of these aristocratic clans lasted only a little more than fifty years before it collapsed under the resistance of the people of various nationalities.

After the dissolution of Western Tsin, the country was divided again and came under the rule of the Southern and Northern Dynasties.

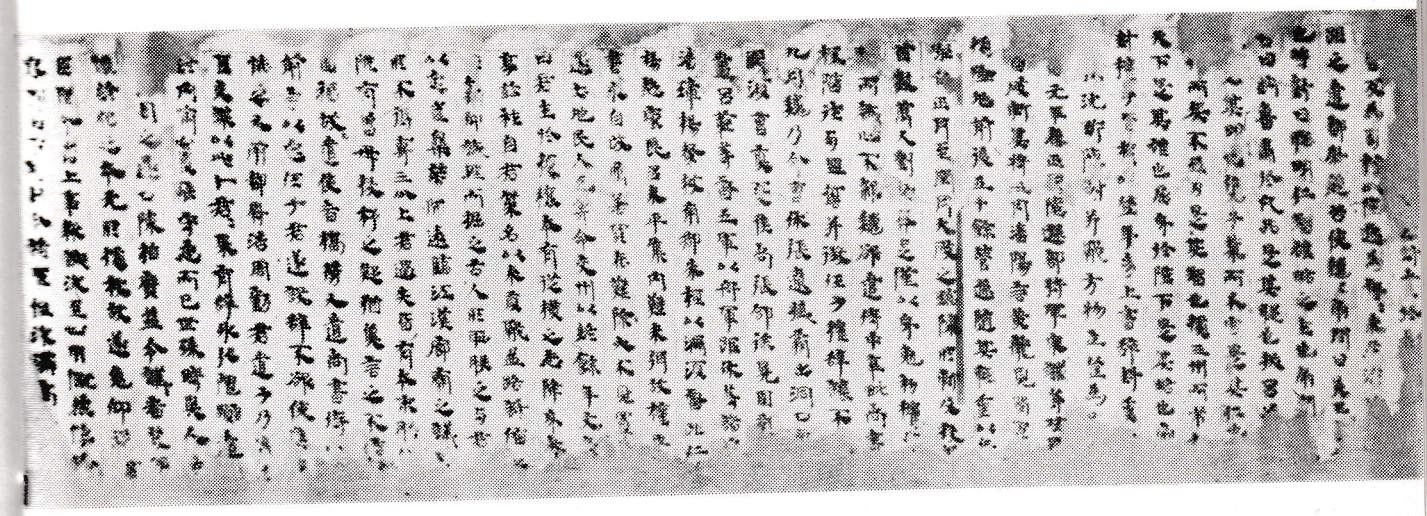
Brick picturing farm work and military drill. (Wei-Western Tsin) Unearthed at Chiayukuan, Kansu, in 1972.

Ram-shaped celadon of Wu, one of the three kingdoms. An example of China's early celadon handicraft work. Unearthed at Nanking, Kiangsu, in 1958.

Celadon vessel decorated with a circle of lotus flower petal lappets. (Southern Chi) Unearthed at Wuchang, Hupeh, in 1956.



Colour painted pottery camel. (Northern Chi) Unearthed at Taiyuan, Shansi, in 1955.



Fragment from a hand-copied *History of the Three Kingdoms*, showing part of the "Biography of Sun Chuan." (Western Tsin) This hand-copied version was made fairly soon after the completion of the book, which by that time had already been taken to Sinkiang, testifying to the close relations existing between Sinkiang and inland China. Unearthed at Turfan, Sinkiang, in 1965.

DEVELOPMENT OF A UNIFIED MULTI-NATIONAL COUNTRY AND THE ASCENDANCY OF FEUDAL ECONOMY AND CULTURE

(The Sui, Tang and Five Dynasties)

(581—960 A.D.)

Unification under the Sui Dynasty ended the division between north and south which had lasted over 270 years.

The labouring people dug the 4,000-*li*-long Grand Canal, linking the north and south economically. The 37-metre-long Chaochow Bridge designed by an artisan, Li Chun, is the earliest extant pierless single-arch stone bridge in the world.

The Sui Dynasty adopted a series of measures for concentrating political power in the hands of the central authorities in order to strengthen control over the localities and the landlord-aristocrats. These aristocrats nevertheless continued to wield considerable power. Their cruel exploitation and the brutal rule of Emperor Yang Ti touched off peasant uprisings which swept across the whole country. As the insurrection gathered force, the rebel contingents gradually coalesced into three powerful armies — the Wa Kang army in Honan, the Hopei rebel troops and the Kiangsu and Anhwei peasant army. These were the forces which overthrew the Sui Dynasty. Turning these peasant uprisings to their own use, Li Yuan and his son Li Shih-min, who were aristocrats, established the Tang Dynasty.

The powerful aristocrats were weakened by the heavy blows of the peasant insurrections in the later years of the Sui Dynasty. This enabled Li Shih-min and Wu Tse-tien to enforce a political line of fostering ordinary landlords and curbing the big landlord aristocrats in order to consolidate the unification of the country. The document recording the commission of Fan Teh-ta, unearthed in Turfan, Sinkiang, is important evidence in regard to the administration of Suiyeh Township in the early Tang period.

In the wake of the peasant wars, the peasants' relationship of personal dependency on the landlord class was somewhat weakened. The Tang Dynasty in its early period expanded the land equalization system and the *tsu yung tiao* system. (The latter was a system combining a land tax, payment in kind and corvee service.) No land allotments were made to the private household men-at-arms or servants, while labour service was gradually replaced by payment in kind. At the same time, the practice of tenancy by contract was promoted, which gave rise to a system of regular collection of prescribed rent. All this was achieved through struggle during the peasant uprisings.

The labouring people reclaimed wasteland on a large scale, built water conservancy works, invented new-type farm tools such as the curved-shaft plough and the water-wheel with rotating barrels and devised new irrigating equipment, thereby raising per-unit agricultural output. New handicraft attainments included the fine mirrors inlaid with mother-of-pearl or gold and silver at the back, gorgeous silk fabrics, finely-glazed porcelain and the famous three-coloured glazed pottery. The capital, Changan, was a centre of economic and cultural exchange between China and other countries. A suggestion of its magnificence during the Tang Dynasty is provided by the architectural remains at the old site of the city and by the large quantity of artifacts excavated there.

Military and political organs (*tu hu fu*) were established at Anpei, Peiting and Anhsi in north and northwest China, and similar offices (*tu tu fu*), at Heishui and Pohai in the northeast. Big contributions were made by the people of various nationalities during the Tang Dynasty to consolidating the unification of the country and to promoting economic development, as evidenced by a stone tablet erected in Lhasa, Tibet, commemorating the Tang-Tufan alliance; cotton, cotton fabrics and the seal of Puleichow — a place under the jurisdiction of the Peiting *Tu Hu Fu* — discovered in Sinkiang; the Pohai archaeological findings unearthed in Kirin and Heilungkiang; and the Nan Chao relics discovered in Yunnan.

Tang historical documents and relics recording friendly visits between China and other Asian and African countries show that China's economic and cultural contacts with other countries had reached a new height. Hsuan Tsang's book about his trip abroad, entitled *Records of Western Travels*, is an invaluable source of information for researchers in the ancient history and geography of central and southern Asian countries.

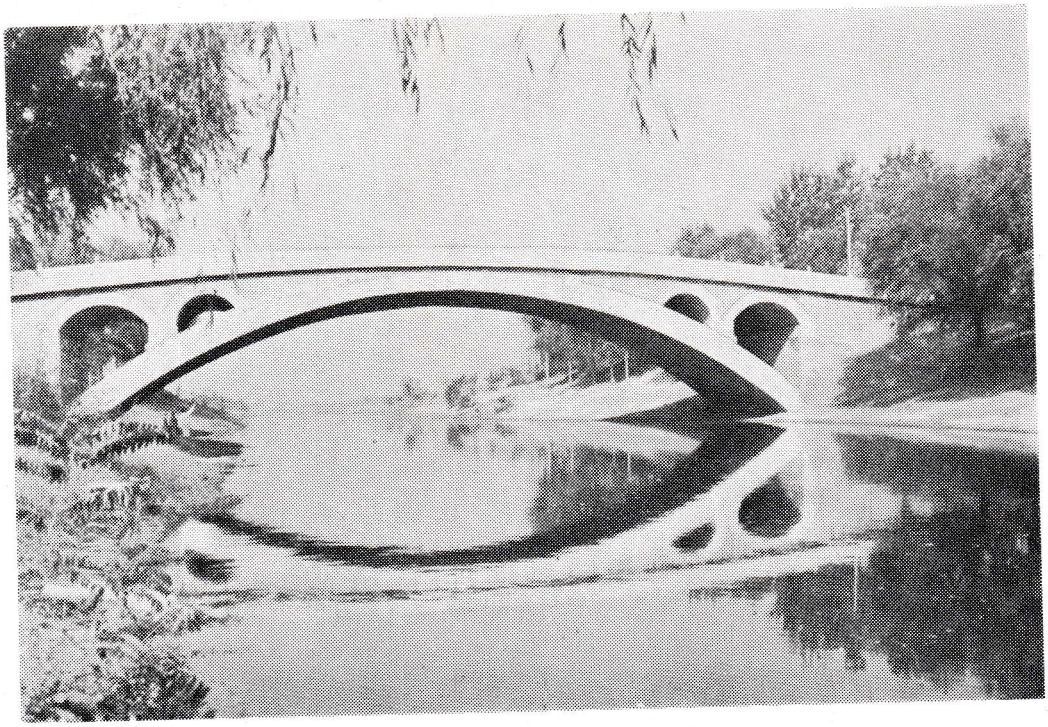
Unification of the country, economic prosperity and economic and cultural exchanges with foreign countries provided conditions enabling the people of China's various nationalities to create a rich and colourful art and culture. Wood-block printing was invented at that time. The astronomer, Chang Sui (as a monk, known as Yi Hsing), was the first in the world to ascertain the length of the meridian. Sun Ssu-miao summed up and developed Chinese medical practice and pharmacology. China's classical poetry reach-

ed its zenith in the Tang period, with such outstanding poets as Li Po, Tu Fu, Li Ho and Pai Chu-yi. A new style emerged in art, as exemplified in Tunhuang and Lungmen cave art, also in calligraphy, painting, music, dancing and architecture.

In the middle period of the Tang Dynasty, the centralized power of the empire gradually weakened, while local separatist forces grew daily. After the "An-Shih Rebellion," eunuchs monopolized state power, military governors set up independent regimes, class contradictions steadily sharpened and peasant uprisings broke out continuously. Political reforms instituted by Wang Shu-wen and Liu Tsung-yuan, both reformists of the landlord class, were suppressed by conservative forces. Liu Tsung-yuan's essay "On Ducal States" forcefully refuted prevalent Confucian ideas which made for division and retrogression.

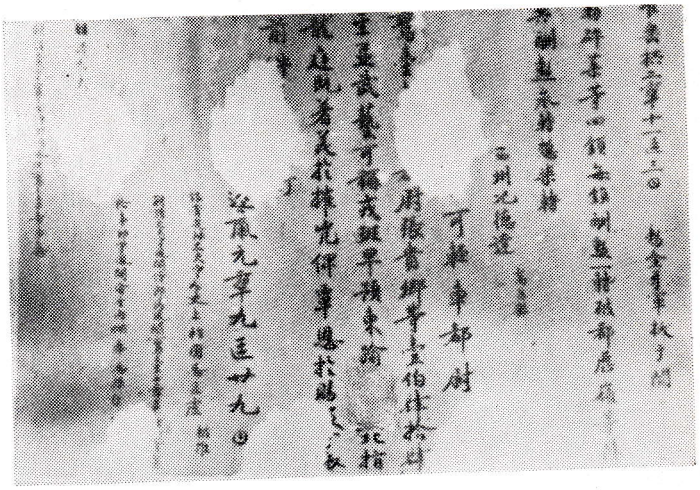
Towards the end of the Tang Dynasty, as political life further deteriorated, the social productive forces suffered serious setbacks. The plight of the peasant masses was unendurable, as spelled out in fragments of documents and contracts unearthed in Turfan and Tunhuang, certifying to loans of grain or money, the bonding of one's own person and the selling of children. In 874 A.D. a great peasant revolt led by Huang Chao broke out. After fighting throughout the land for ten years, the insurgent troops took Changan and set up the peasant revolutionary power entitled the Great Chi. They dealt the feudal order heavy blows, sweeping away the remaining forces of the aristocratic clans rooted in the Southern and Northern Dynasties. Rhymes like the following were written: "Black hands which only knew the plough have come to wield power" and "Officials lie dead in the street and are trampled by many feet." They tell of the peasants' seizure of political power and their suppression of the reactionary aristocrats and officials. The slogan of "equalization" first raised by the insurgent troops of Huang Chao exerted a far-reaching influence on subsequent peasant wars.

The period of the Five Dynasties and the Ten States was a continuation of the separatist situation which had existed since the latter part of the Tang Dynasty. During this period the south outstripped the north in economic development and the country's economic centre gradually moved south.



Chaochow Bridge.

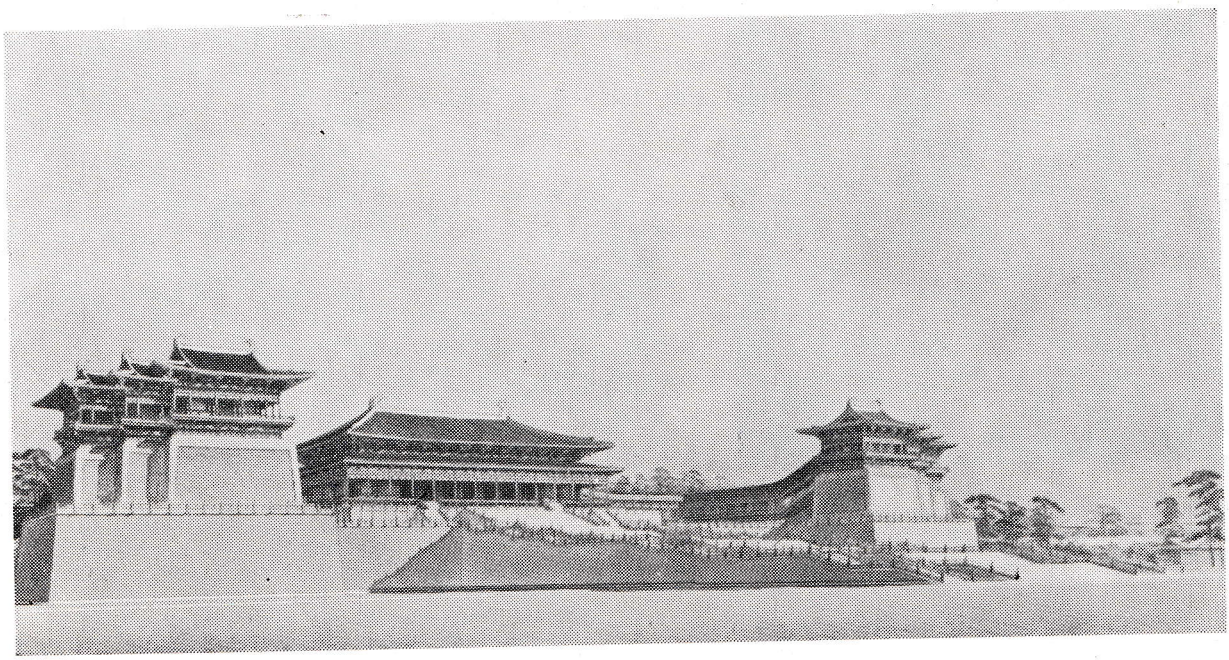
A contract renting land to Chao Huai-man. Drawn up in the 17th year of the Chen Kuan reign (643 A.D.) of the Tang Dynasty. Unearthed at Turfan, Sinkiang, in 1959.



Official document appointing Fan Teh-ta to office issued by the Tang government in the first year of the Yen Tsai reign (694 A.D.). It bears reference to the administration of Suiyeh Township in the early Tang period. Unearthed at Turfan, Sinkiang, in 1968.

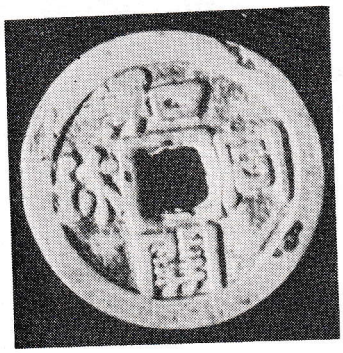
Back of a mirror inlaid with figures, flowers and birds in mother-of-pearl. (Tang Dynasty) Unearthed at Loyang, Honan, in 1955.

White porcelain candle-stick with lotus flower design. (Tang Dynasty) Unearthed in Shenhsien County, Honan, in 1956.

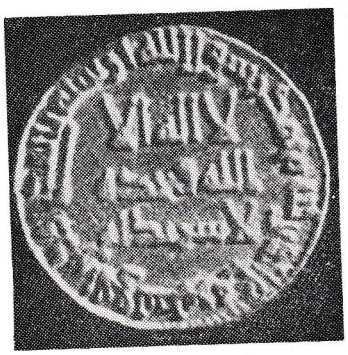


Painting representing an approximate likeness of the Hanyuan Hall at the Taming Palace in the Tang capital Changan.

Bust of Huang Chao. Made in 1959.



Japanese silver coin with the characters *ho tung kai chen.* Unearthed at Sian, Shensi, in 1970.



Arabian gold coin. Unearthed at Sian, Shensi, in 1964.

Eastern Roman Empire gold coin. Unearthed at Sian, Shensi, in 1970.

Persian silver coin. Unearthed at Sian, Shensi, in 1955.

CO-EXISTENCE OF POLITICAL POWERS OF VARIOUS NATIONALITIES AND THEIR UNIFICATION, FEUDAL SOCIETY BEGAN ENTERING ITS LATER PERIOD

(Liao, Sung, Western Hsia, Kin and Yuan)

(916—1368 A.D.)

Beginning in the tenth century, a number of political powers emerged in Chinese history one after the other, including the Liao, Sung, Western Hsia and Kin.

Liao, a state established by the Khitan nationality, occupied a vast area extending from the basin of the Heilung River in the north to the sea in the east and the northern part of Hopei in the south. The obituary article of Emperor Tao Tsung of Liao written in both the Khitan and Han languages, unearthed in Linhsi, Liaoning, and funerary objects found in the tomb of the husband of a Liao princess in Chihfeng, illustrate the process of feudalization of the Khitans and their close economic and cultural relations with the Hans.

The Tanghsiang nationality (know as Tanguts) set up the Western Hsia Kingdom in the region of modern Ningsia, Kansu and northern Shensi. Bronze Western Hsia coins and a stone tablet inscription in the Western Hsia and Han languages indicate the cross-currents of influence between the Tanghsiang and Han economies and cultures.

In 960, Chao Kuang-yin established the Sung Dynasty. In its early period, Sung rulers strengthened their control over the army and local authorities, bringing to an end the existence of separate, independent regimes which had persisted since the Five Dynasties and the Ten States.

In the early 12th century, the Nuchen nationality living in China's Heilung River basin founded the Kin Dynasty which eventually wiped out the Liao and the Northern Sung. Ruling over a vast area extending from the Outer Khingan Mountain Range to the Huai River basin, the Kin existed side by side with the Southern Sung for more than a century. Through long years of contacts, the Hans and Nuchens became amalgamated.

Sung officials and landlords annexed large stretches of land, cruelly exploiting and oppressing the peasants. From early Sung times, peasant revolts broke out one after the other without let-up, some of them widespread rebellions such as that led by Wang Hsiao-po and Li Shun, the Liangshan uprising, an insurrection led by Fang La and another by Chung Hsiang and Yang Yao. Ying Yun coins were minted during the revolutionary regime of Li Shun in Chengtu.

Sung peasant insurrectionists raised the revolutionary slogan "Equality in social status and equal distribution of wealth" which marks a new step forward in the development of China's peasant revolutions. Lenin pointed out: **"The idea of equality is the most revolutionary idea in the struggle against the old system of absolutism in general, and against the old system of feudal landlordism in particular."**

Serious social crises aggravated the contradictions within the landlord class. Its reformists and die-hards were locked in a fierce struggle. Undermined by the die-hards of the big landlords, Wang An-shih's reforms ended in failure. Cheng-Chu Neo-Confucianism, a recast of the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius by the reactionary ideologists Cheng Hao, Cheng Yi and Chu Hsi, became the main ideological pillar of the reactionary rule of later dynasties.

With feudal rule staggering under the incessant blows of the peasant uprisings the relationship between the landlords and the peasants as to the latter's dependency on the former changed somewhat, and advances were made in agriculture. Acreage of reclaimed land was markedly extended and grain varieties were exchanged between north and south. Handicrafts, which were organized into guilds, made headway too. The technical level of mining, metallurgy, porcelain-making, ship-building and paper-making far surpassed that of any previous dynasty. A lively commodity economy began to flourish, and paper money (called *chiao tzu* or *hui tzu*) came into use. Rural fairs were much more common than before. The scroll painting *Riverside Scene at Chingming Festival* vividly illustrates the commercial prosperity of Kaifeng, capital of Northern Sung. Kwangchow, Chuanchow and Mingchow (present-day Ningpo) were the main trading ports through which large amounts of porcelain ware, silk fabrics and other handicraft products were passed on their way to Asian and African regions.

Gunpowder, printing and the compass — China's three important inventions in ancient times — are great contributions which she made to world history. Pi Sheng, a common labourer, invented movable printing type during the Sung Dynasty; the compass was employed in navigation and introduced to Europe via the Arabs; the use of gunpowder spread widely, reaching Europe through central Asia. Shen Kuo not only summed up but developed many scientific attainments of previous dynasties in his *Meng Hsi Pi Tan (Notes Written in Dream Brook Garden).* Many new achievements were also made in the fields of acupuncture and moxibustion as well as architecture.

Hsin Chi-chi and Lu Yu were famous Sung composers of *tzu*, a new form of poetry.

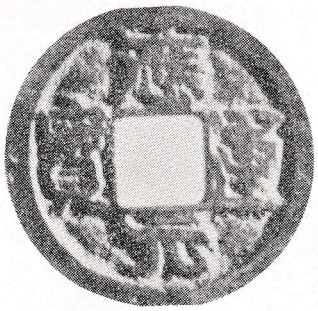
In 1271, Kublai Khan, a Mongolian aristocrat, gave his empire the dynastic title of Yuan and went on to unify China. The Yuan Dynasty set up provincial administration all over the country. The Eastern Expedition Marshal of Shuitata Prefecture, Liaoyang Province, had his office in the city of Nurkan by the estuary of the Heilung River. Yuan Dynasty also set up state authority in Tibet to take charge of local political and religious affairs. The Yuan capital, Tatu (present-day Peking), was one of the big world-famous cities of that time. A double-phoenix design stone carving and a stone plate with dragon design unearthed in Peking indicate the scale and architectural character of the city.

Blue-and-white ware and underglaze red porcelain were successfully developed during the Yuan Dynasty. Huang Tao-po, a labouring woman, improved the technique of cotton spinning and weaving. The agronomist Wang Chen wrote his *Nung Shu (Treatise on Agriculture)*. All these achievements, together with the simplified armillary sphere made by the astronomer Kuo Shou-ching and the works of the playwright Kuan Han-ching, were new contributions made by the people of various nationalities to the motherland's economy and culture.

The new progress in travel and communications inside and outside China during the Yuan Dynasty promoted economic and cultural exchange both at home and abroad.

Cruel oppression by Mongolian aristocrats and Han landlords provoked sustained resistance on the part of the people of various nationalities. In the mid-14th century, a big peasant uprising led by Liu Fu-tung and Chu Yuan-chang broke out. The official seal of the peasant political power they set up and the Lung Feng coins are relics of the uprising. The flames of revolt swept the country, bringing the dark rule of the Yuan Dynasty to an end.

The transition of Chinese feudal society to its later stage began during the Sung and Yuan Dynasties.



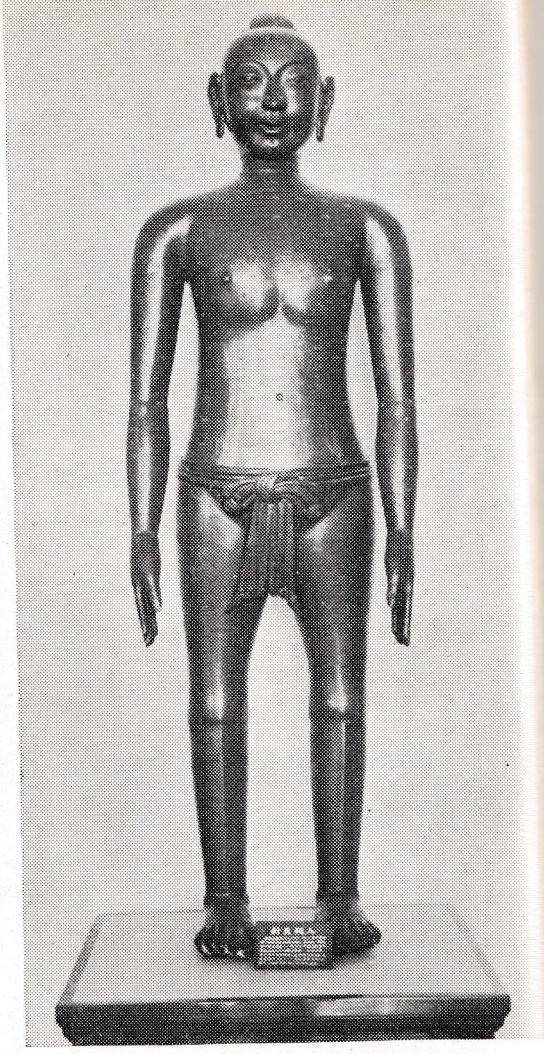
Ying Yun coins minted in the first year of the Ying Yun reign (994 A.D.) of the Great Shu, a state set up by Li Shun.

Back of a bronze mirror decorated with double-fish design. (Kin Dynasty) Unearthed at Ahcheng, Heilungkiang, in 1964.

Gourd-shaped porcelain vase made in the Lungchuan kiln. (Sung)

Detail of a Northern Sung painting *Riverside Scene at Chingming Festival* by Chang Tse-tuan, a famous artist of the time.

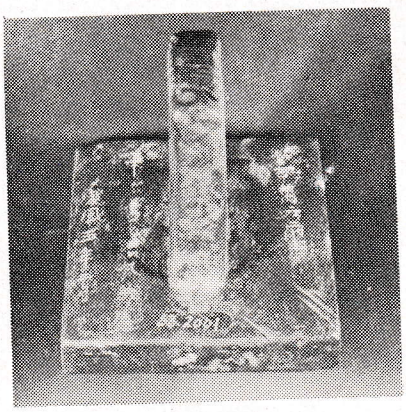
Statue of Pi Sheng, carved in 1958. During the Ching Li reign (1041—1048) of the Northern Sung, he made type models out of clay and hardened them by firing in a kiln. These could be set, character by character, for printing books. All movable printing type, whether of wood, bronze or lead, was developed on this basis.

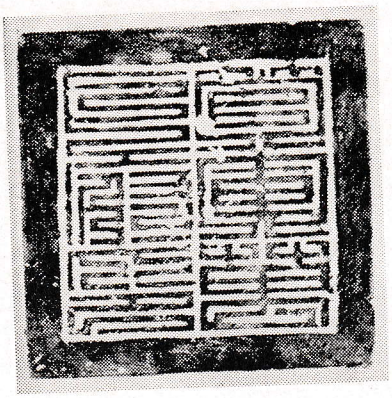


Bronze statue dotted with acupuncture points. Such a statue was first made by the court physician Wang Wei-yi during the Tien Sheng reign (1023—1031) of the Northern Sung. During the examination of physicians majoring in acupuncture and moxibustion, the statue, filled with water and covered with wax, was used for testing the would-be practicians. This bronze statue was made in the eighth year of the Cheng Tung reign (1443) of the Ming Dynasty.

The world's oldest cannon, made of bronze. (Yuan Dynasty) Unearthed at Fangshan, Peking, in 1940.

Section devoted to Liao and Sung exhibits.





Official bronze seal cast in the fifth year of the Lung Feng reign (1359) of the Great Sung peasant revolutionary political power set up by Han Lin-erh and Liu Fu-tung, leaders of the Red Turban Army, at the end of the Yuan Dynasty. Unearthed at Tsaochuang, Shantung, in 1969.

CONSOLIDATION OF A UNIFIED, MULTI-NATIONAL COUNTRY, GRADUAL DECLINE OF THE FEUDAL SYSTEM AND THE FIRST SHOOTS OF CAPITALISM

(Ming and Ching)

(1368—1840 A.D.)

After establishing the Ming Dynasty, Chu Yuan-chang turned into the chief representative of the landlord class. In order to strengthen the despotic centralized power and consolidate feudal rule, he abolished the post of prime minister; this enabled the emperor himself to rule directly over the six boards — Board of Personnel, Board of Finance and Population, Board of Rites, Board of War, Board of Punishment and Board of Public Works. Control over localities was tightened by setting up a *wei suo* military system all over the country. The Nurkan administration established in early Ming times controlled 184 *wei* and 20 *suo*. The tablet of Yungning Temple erected at Tehlin by the estuary of the Heilung River records the history of its rule over the valleys of the Heilung and Wusuli Rivers in the Ming Dynasty.

Peasant revolts at the end of the Yuan Dynasty promoted the development of the social economy. By reclaiming wasteland and building water conservancy works, the labouring people gradually increased farm output. Handicrafts such as iron-smelting, ship-building, spinning and weaving and ceramics all made outstanding progress. Cloth made in Sungchiang was known and sold throughout the country. The blue-and-white Ming porcelain was much more refined than the Yuan, while Ming polychrome and *tou tsai* (clashing colours) ware represent entirely new products. Two paintings *Splendid Scenes in the Imperial Capital* and *Prosperous Fair at the Southern Capital* illustrate commercial prosperity of both Peking and Nanking, a reflection of the development of commodity economy. In this period the early beginnings of capitalism rose in the silk-weaving and other trades in some districts south of the Yangtze River.

Early in the 15th century, Cheng Ho, in command of a large fleet, made seven long ocean voyages, passing by our territory the South China Sea Is-

lands and sailing as far as the east coast of Africa. These trips promoted the friendship between China and other Asian and African countries. Cheng Ho's visits to various countries are recorded on the tablet of celestial beauty's efficacy in Changlo, Fukien, and the tablet of Cheng Ho's donations in the Temple of the Standing Buddha in Sri Lanka.

During the middle period of the Ming Dynasty, as land annexations increased, class contradictions became more acute and peasant revolts kept breaking out. Insurrectionists led by Liu Liu and Liu Chi fought in Hopei, Shantung and Kiangsu, and marched on Peking three times. They raided the Temple of Confucius in Chufu, fully demonstrating their revolutionary spirit of opposition to feudal rule and to the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius. During the reign of Emperor Wan Li, anti-feudal struggles were launched by city people with handicraftsmen as the main force in Soochow and other places. In the midst of mounting social crises and deepening contradictions within the ruling class, Li Chih came to the fore, a progressive thinker who upheld the Legalist school against the Confucian school, and also Chang Chu-cheng, a reformer in the landlord class. Chang's political reform was far from enough to stem the tide of Ming decline.

One of the most famous peasant wars in Chinese history was the great peasant uprising led by Li Tzu-cheng at the end of the Ming Dynasty. The revolting army established the revolutionary political power of the peasants entitled Great Shun and raised the militant slogan "Equalization of land and no grain taxes," directing its spearhead at the system of feudal land ownership. These actions carried the peasant war to a higher stage. The insurrectionary troops were supported by the peasants everywhere. A ditty gained wide currency: "Support King Chuang, and pay no grain taxes." (King Chuang or the Dare-All King, was Li Tzu-cheng.) In 1644, Li Tzu-cheng entered Peking and overthrew the Ming Dynasty. Valuable historical relics of the then peasant revolutionary power are a bronze seal made in the first year of Yung Chang with the stamp "Director of Military Reclamation of the Board of Public Works" and Yung Chang coins.

Chairman Mao has pointed out: In Chinese feudal society, **"each of the major peasant uprisings and wars dealt a blow to the feudal regime of the time, and hence more or less furthered the growth of the social productive forces. However, since neither new productive forces, nor new relations of production, nor new class forces, nor any advanced political party existed in those days, the peasant uprisings and wars did not have correct leadership such as the proletariat and the Communist Party provide today; every peasant revolution failed, and the peasantry was invariably used by the landlords and the nobility, either during or after the revolution, as a lever for bringing about dynastic change."**

The Manchus have since ancient times been one of China's many nationalities. In 1616, Nurhachu, a Ming official of the Chienchow administrative area and head of the Manchus, established independent local political

power in northeast China. Following the capture of Peking by Li Tzu-cheng in 1644, the Manchu nobility, in collusion with Han officials and landlords, suppressed the peasant uprising and founded the Ching Dynasty, the last feudal regime in Chinese history.

In the early Ching period, the Chinese people fought against Western colonialists on many occasions, further consolidating their unified, multi-national country. In 1662, Cheng Cheng-kung led the people along the southeast coast in driving out the Dutch colonialists and recovered the Chinese territory Taiwan. During the reign of Emperor Kang Hsi, the Chinese people resisted tsarist Russian aggression in China's northeast and defended China's vast territory of the Heilung and Wusuli River valleys. Negotiations took place and concessions from the Chinese side ended in the signing of the Sino-Russian Treaty of Nipchu in 1689. Later, a splittist rebellion organized by a few reactionary aristocrats of the Dzungar tribe of the Mongolian nationality with the backing of tsarist Russia, was quelled, and the northwestern frontier of our country consolidated. The unified, multi-national China in the course of its development came to embrace more than fifty nationalities by the time of the Ching Dynasty. The people of various nationalities all made contributions to building the great motherland.

The big peasant uprisings at the close of the Ming Dynasty paved the way for the further growth of agriculture and handicrafts in the early Ching period. Commodity economy also expanded, and the early shoots of capitalism which had sprouted in mid-Ming times grew fast. Two tablets preserved in Soochow bring to light the capitalist nature of the relationship existing between employer and employee in handicrafts: one forbidding skilled craftsmen to strike, carved in the 12th year of the Yung Cheng reign, the other forbidding artisans of paper-making workshops to press for wage increases, made in the 21st year of the Chien Lung reign. Hsinchiao in Nanking and the Hall of Looms in a Soochow temple were used as meeting places by handicraftsmen waging strikes and other struggles.

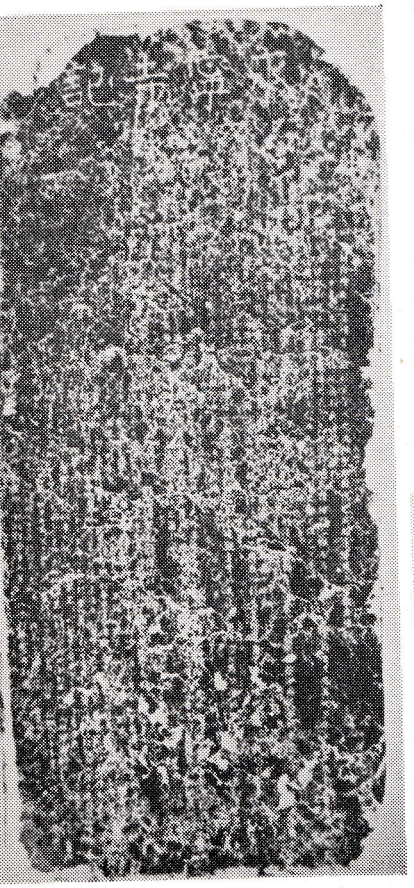
Cruel exploitation and oppression of the people of various nationalities by the Manchu and Han landlord class provoked the former to continually rise in revolt. During the latter half of the reign of Chien Lung, one uprising after another broke out, among them that of the Taiwan people led by Lin Shuang-wen, of the Miao people in Hunan and Kweichow, and of the White Lotus Sect, a peasant uprising led by a labouring woman, Wang Tsung-erh, in Sze-chuan, Hupeh and Shensi. They shook the rule of the Ching Dynasty. Valuable historical records of these struggles include notices to reassure the public and military orders put up by the insurrectionists led by Lin Shuang-wen, and documents connected with the Miao people's uprising.

Early Ching foreign trade reflected the traditional relations of friendship between the Chinese people and the people of Asian and African countries. China exported silk fabrics, porcelain ware and tea and imported arts and crafts from Korea, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Japan and Burma, and raw

medicine from Africa. Maize, sweet potato and tobacco from Latin America and articles testifying to commodity, scientific and cultural exchange between China and Europe show that economic and cultural contacts between China and the rest of the world increased widely.

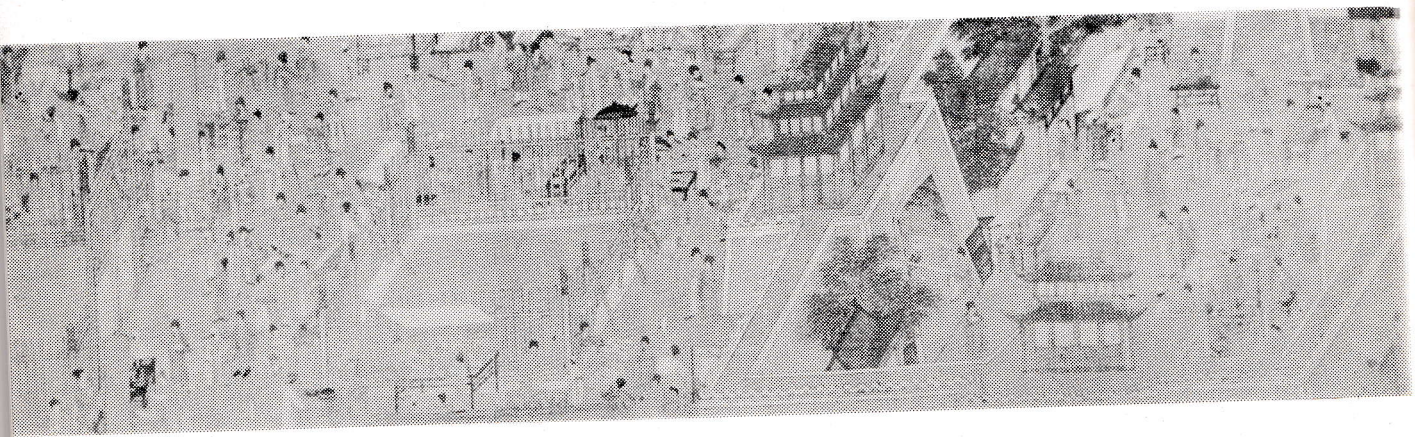
New achievements were scored in science and technology during the Ming and Ching Dynasties. Sung Ying-hsing, a scientist, Li Shih-chen, physician and pharmacologist, and the geographer Hsu Hsia-keh all produced important works. Literature also saw new progress. The full-length novel divided into chapters appeared, such as *Pilgrimage to the West, The Scholars* and *Water Margin.* The latter, in advocating a capitulationist line, serves us as teaching material by negative example to help all the people recognize capitulationists.

During the early Ching period, as the rudiments of capitalism developed, progressive thinkers and men of letters came to the fore. The materialist thinker Wang Fu-chih's ideas of upholding the Legalist school and opposing the Confucian school greatly influenced bourgeois revolutionary democrats who came later. The famous novel *The Dream of the Red Chamber* by the outstanding writer Tsao Hsueh-chin profoundly reflected the class contradictions and class struggle in feudal society during its last stages. It dealt heavy blows at the doctrines of Confucius and Mencius and heralded the impending doom of feudal society.



A rubbing of the tablet of Yungning Temple. The tablet was erected in the 11th year of the Yung Lo reign (1413) of the Ming Dynasty at Tehlin by the estuary of the Heilung River, where the office of the Nurkan administration was situated. The tablet recorded the history of Ming's rule over this area. In 1885, Ching scholar Tsao Ting-chieh, who returned from Tehlin, made a rubbing of the tablet and drew a map showing the exact place where the tablet was erected.

Blue-and-white flat vase with sea wave, cloud and dragon design, dating back to the Hsuan Teh reign of the Ming Dynasty. Made in the imperial kiln at Chingtehchen, Kiangsi. An example of early Ming porcelain.

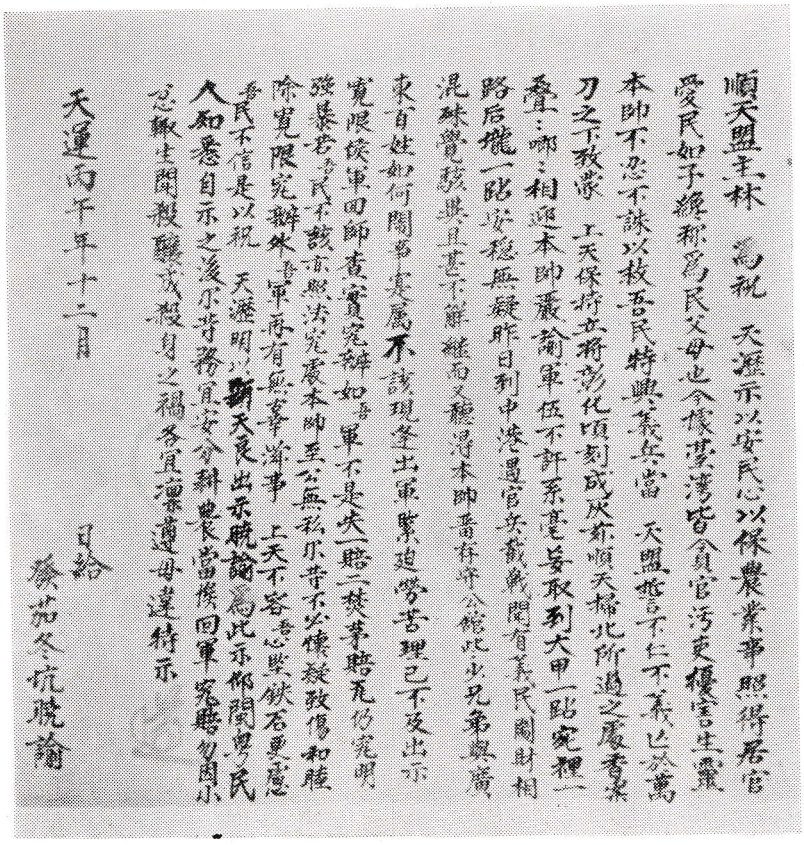


Detail of a Ming painting *Splendid Scenes in the Imperial Capital.*

A picture of Li Tzu-cheng's entry into Peking, painted in traditional Chinese style in 1973.

Official bronze seal, cast in Peking, for the Director of Military Reclamation of the Board of Public Works, in the first year of the Yung Chang reign of the Great Shun. In 1644 Li Tzu-cheng established the Great Shun, a peasant revolutionary political power operating through six administrative boards. Unearthed at Peking in 1959.

Yung Chang coins minted by the Great Shun government in the first year of its Yung Chang reign.

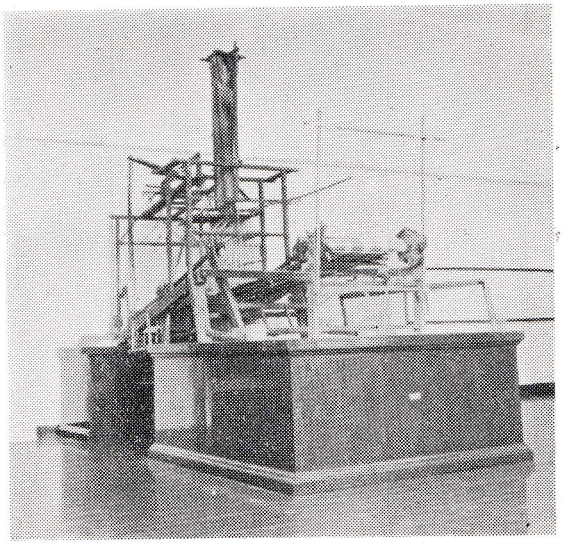


順天盟主林 爲祝 天遵示以安民心以保農業事照得居官
愛民如子總都爲民父母迄今淺漢皆貪官污吏樓害生靈
本帥不忍不誅以救吾民特興義兵當 天盟惟予仁不義已於萬
刀之下救衆 上天保持立將彰化頃刻成灰永順天福北所過之處香案
聲：哪：相迎本帥撫諭軍伍不許索擾違者取到大甲一貼究辦一
路后壠一貼安穩無疑昨日到中港遇官兵截戰聞有義民閩財相
混殊覺駭異且甚不解繼而又聽得本帥喬裝分兵先來百姓如何開事是屬不該現全出軍緊迫勞苦理已不及出示
寬限候軍回師查實究辦如尊軍不是犬一聽一焚事聽其仍究明
強暴若百民不該亦照法究處本帥至公無私不肯不分懷疑致傷和睦
除寬限究辦外尊軍再有無辜滋事 上天不容吾心堅鉄石更意
爲民不信是以祝 天遵明示 天良出示曉諭爲此示仰閩粵民
人知悉自示之後爾等務宜安分耕農當候回軍究辦勿聞小
忍釀生閙殺驟戕殺身之禍各宜凜遵毋違特示

天運丙午年十二月 日給

蔡苟冬抗曉諭

Notice to reassure the public put up by Lin Shuang-wen, leader of an insurrection (1787).



A loom for weaving Szechuan brocade, used in a Chengtu mill during the reign of both Chia Ching and Tao Kuang of the Ching Dynasty.

SEMI-COLONIAL AND SEMI-FEUDAL SOCIETY

(PERIOD OF THE OLD-DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION)

(1840-1919 A.D.)

Chairman Mao has pointed out: **"The history of China's transformation into a semi-colony and colony by imperialism in collusion with Chinese feudalism is at the same time a history of struggle by the Chinese people against imperialism and its lackeys."**

During the thirties of the 19th century, the Chinese people strongly opposed British plunder of their country by means of opium trafficking. This culminated in a vigorous campaign in 1839 to ban the opium trade. With the support of the people and patriotic soldiers, Lin Tse-hsu, a Ching court official, ordered the destruction of large quantities of opium by the seaside at Humen, Kwangtung Province, and led the fight to beat back repeated armed provocations by British troops along the coast. In June 1840, Britain launched the Opium War, its long-harboured scheme to invade China. The Chinese armymen and civilians rose up in heroic counter-attacks to defend themselves. An artillery piece from the Humen forts during the battles against the British invaders, a signal flag used by the people of Sanyuanli near Kwangchow for directing their forces in the fight against the British intruders and their weapons and captured articles are all of them historical evidence of the Chinese people's struggle against foreign aggression.

The Ching government, which compromised with and capitulated to imperialist countries, was forced to sign the Sino-British Treaty of Nanking. Availing themselves of this opportunity, the United States and France stepped in and imposed the Sino-American Treaty of Wanghia and the Sino-French Treaty of Whampoa on the Ching court. Thereafter China gradually sank to the status of a semi-colonial, semi-feudal society.

After the Opium War the Chinese people's struggle against aggression and oppression continued unabated. The tremendous peasant revolutionary movement of the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom led by Hung Hsiu-chuan broke out in 1851. The Taiping troops captured Nanking early in 1853 where they established a peasant revolutionary political power, promulgated a revolutionary programme and carried out a series of revolutionary measures. They also mounted western and northern expeditions. During the northern expedition Taiping troops fought their way to the vicinity of Tientsin. Relevant articles and documents include Hung Hsiu-chuan's jade seal, *Land System of the Heavenly Kingdom*, Taiping weapons, a report on the military situation by the northern expeditionary army, a business licence of the type issued by the peasant regime to industrial and commercial enterprises, a marriage certificate and an order prohibiting the spread of Confucian writings. All these signify that by then, the Chinese peasant revolutionary movement had entered the new stage of fighting against imperialism and feudalism.

Backed by tsarist Russia and the United States, Britain and France jointly unleashed the Second Opium War in 1856 to wrest more special privileges from China. Having been defeated in the war, the Ching government surrendered and was compelled to sign unequal treaties with the four imperialist powers in which it gave up many sovereign rights and ceded large tracts of territory. Following this it leaned more and more heavily on the foreign powers, and reactionaries at home and abroad lined themselves up in a counter-revolutionary alliance.

The Taiping troops fought heroic battles against the combined attacks of the domestic and foreign reactionary forces. In 1862 they heavily defeated a foreign rifle detachment in Ningpo, Chekiang Province, and in an official notification, warned British and French navies anchored there against interfering in China's internal affairs. Their actions demonstrated the Chinese people's solemn stand against aggression from abroad.

The Taiping revolutionary movement was the largest of all the peasant wars in modern Chinese history. It not only dealt blows at the imperialist forces in China but also expedited the downfall of the reactionary rule of the Ching Dynasty.

By the end of the 19th century, many of China's neighbouring countries had become colonies of Britain, France, Russia and Japan. France launched a war of aggression against China in 1883 and Japan did the same in 1894. Both wars ended in the capitulation of the Ching regime to the foreign aggressors and the imposition of humiliating, unequal treaties on China. After the Sino-Japanese Treaty of Shimonoseki was signed in 1895, our Taiwan compatriots, fighting shoulder-to-shoulder with the rest of the Chinese people,

persisted in the struggle against Japanese occupation of the island for as long as fifty years.

After the Sino-Japanese War, China faced the crisis of being partitioned and national subjugation as the imperialist powers stepped up their economic plunder and contention for spheres of influence in our country.

Engels has said: **Russia is unquestionably a conqueror nation.** Following the Opium War, tsarist Russia frequently made incursions along the lower reaches of the Heilung River and Kuyeh Island in violation of the Sino-Russian Treaty of Nipchu. Pursuing a frenzied policy of aggression to slice up China, it had since the 1850s compelled the Ching government to sign a series of unequal treaties, occupying more than 1,500,000 square kilometres of Chinese territory and grabbing many colonialist privileges.

In the 1870s, a number of merchants, landlords and bureaucrats began setting up modern industries in China. **"The history of the emergence and development of national capitalism is at the same time the history of the emergence and development of the Chinese bourgeoisie and proletariat." "However, the Chinese proletariat emerged and grew simultaneously not only with the Chinese national bourgeoisie but also with the enterprises directly operated by the imperialists in China. Hence, a very large section of the Chinese proletariat is older and more experienced than the Chinese bourgeoisie, and is therefore a greater and more broadly based social force."**

Actuated by the grave national crisis China was facing then, bourgeois reformists represented by Kang Yu-wei, Tan Szu-tung and Yen Fu launched the movement for modernization in 1898. They demanded that the Ching government resist foreign enemies, reform out-dated laws, learn from the West and develop capitalism. Historically this is known as the Reform Movement of 1898. Feudal die-hards with Empress Dowager Tzu Hsi as ringleader considered the movement worse than a catastrophe. Flagrantly proclaiming that they would "rather lose the country than carry out the reform," they brutally suppressed the movement.

In 1900, the Yi Ho Tuan, a peasant organization in the main, holding high the banner of resistance against aggression, launched a world-shaking anti-imperialist patriotic movement to save the nation from doom.

Following the emergence of the Yi Ho Tuan in Shantung, the revolutionary forces spread rapidly over China's northern provinces and for a period of time controlled Peking. In June 1900, as the eight allied armies of Britain, France, Japan, Russia, Germany, the United States, Italy and Austria were frantically mounting an assault on Peking, the Yi Ho Tuan in the Peking-Tientsin area fought head-on battles against them, inflicting a telling blow

upon reactionary forces at home and abroad. In the Northeast the Yi Ho Tuan heroically countered the tsarist Russian invading troops and safeguarded territories of the motherland. Valuable historical relics testifying to the Chinese people's heroic struggle against imperialist aggression include leaflets distributed by the Yi Ho Tuan; flags, weapons and clarions it used; and one of the lengths of thick iron wire which the Yi Ho Tuan of Yilan County, Heilungkiang Province, installed among other things in the Sunghua River to block tsarist Russian warships.

The Yi Ho Tuan waged a tenacious and unremitting struggle against suppression by allied reactionary forces both domestic and foreign, shattered the imperialists' despicable scheme to carve up China and fully demonstrated that **"we the Chinese nation have the spirit to fight the enemy to the last drop of our blood."**

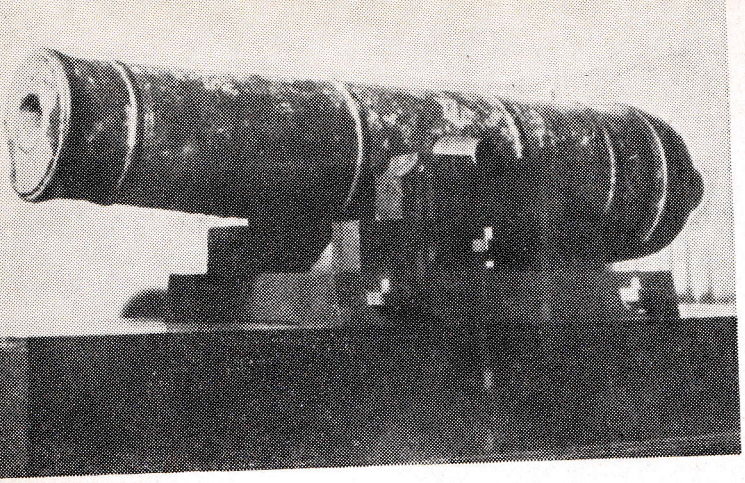
In the wake of the Yi Ho Tuan movement, the Chinese people's struggles against Russia, Britain and the United States and the nationwide movement to repudiate levies and taxes fiercely stormed the decadent Ching rule and the imperialist forces of aggression in China.

A revolution led by the bourgeoisie broke out in 1911: **"The Revolution of 1911 was directed against imperialism. The Chinese directed the revolution against the Ching regime because it was the running dog of imperialism."** The bourgeois revolutionaries headed by Sun Yat-sen spread far and wide democratic revolutionary ideas, organized revolutionary political parties and launched several armed struggles to oppose the Ching regime. To all these revolutionary activities our patriotic overseas compatriots made active contributions. In October 1911, the revolutionaries launched the Wuchang Uprising, and as a result the Ching Dynasty, running dog of the imperialists, collapsed under the onslaught of the people's revolution. The founding of the Republic of China was proclaimed on January 1, 1912. The oath of office taken by Sun Yat-sen at his inauguration as Provisional President of the Republic of China, and the abdication decree of the last Ching emperor document the overthrow by the people of the feudal, autocratic monarchy which had lasted in China for over 2,000 years.

The fruits of this revolution, however, were usurped by imperialism-backed feudal warlords owing to the feebleness of the Chinese national bourgeoisie. **"It left China under imperialist and feudal oppression, so that the anti-imperialist and anti-feudal revolutionary task remained unaccomplished."**

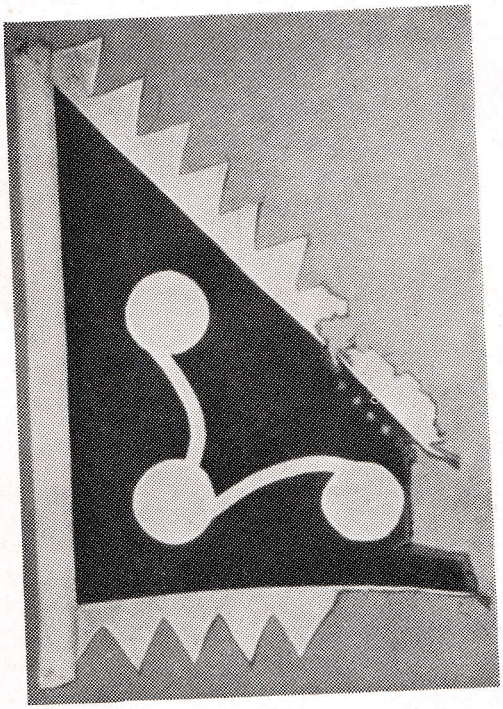
"It is history's verdict that China's bourgeois-democratic revolution against imperialism and feudalism is a task that can be completed, not under the leadership of the bourgeoisie, but only under that of the proletariat." This truth is borne out by the entire history of China's old-democratic revolution.

With the development of national industries during World War I, the Chinese working class grew up in struggles and **"consciously fought for the independence and liberation of China."** Influenced by the October Socialist Revolution, the May 4th Movement — a movement of thoroughgoing and uncompromising opposition to imperialism and feudalism — broke out in 1919. A month later, the working class went on a gigantic political strike and entered the arena of politics as an independent class force. The glimmering of a new dawn appeared in Chinese history, ushering in an entirely new period in the Chinese revolution.



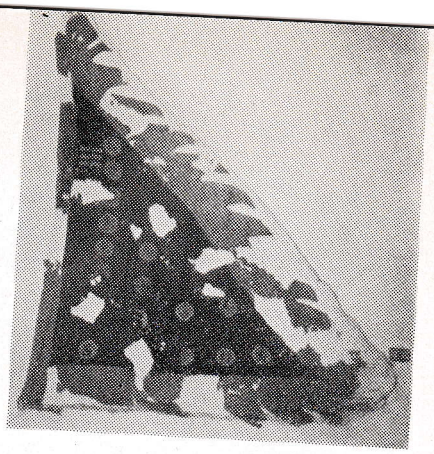
Artillery piece of the Humen forts (1840).

Land System of the Heavenly Kingdom (1853), a revolutionary anti-feudal programme promulgated by the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom after establishing its capital in Tienking (today's Nanking), which proclaims that "all the land under heaven should be cultivated by all the people under heaven."

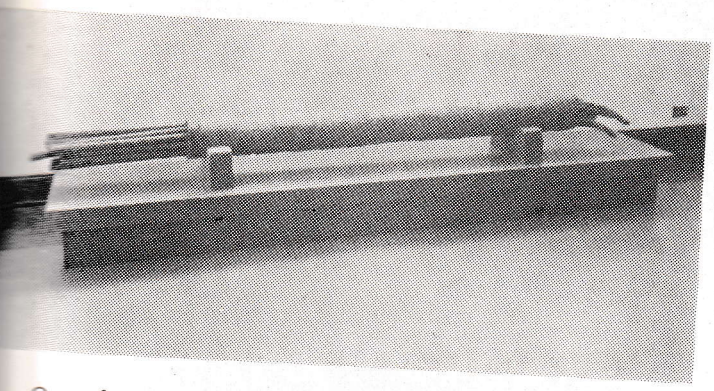


Signal flag used by the Sanyuanli people in Kwangchow during their anti-British struggle (1841).

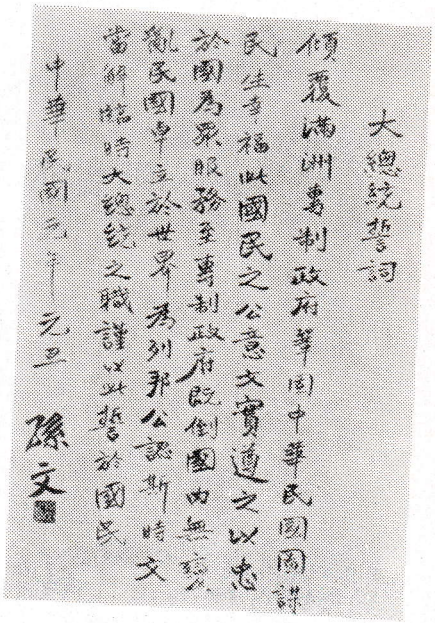
Yi Ho Tuan soldiers jailed by domestic and foreign reactionaries in Tientsin display indomitable revolutionary spirit (1900).



Banner of the Yi Ho Tuan in Shihmen Town, Tsunghua County of Hopei Province (1900).



One of the lengths of iron wire which the Yi Ho Tuan in Yilan County installed in the Sunghua River to block tsarist Russian warships (1900).



Oath of office taken by Sun Yat-sen as Provisional President of the Republic of China (1912).

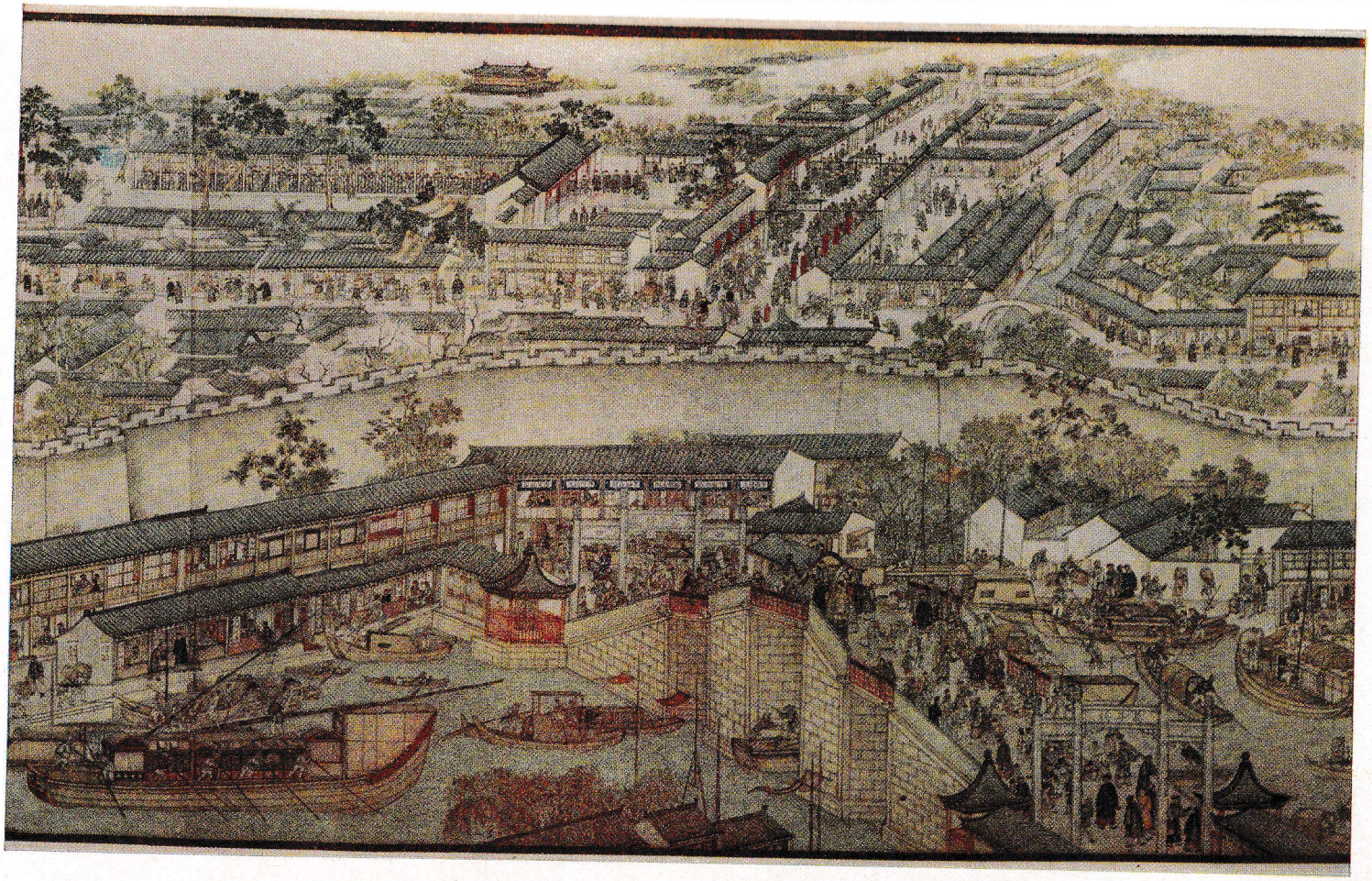
Magazines spreading revolutionary ideas during the preparatory stage of the Revolution of 1911.

A glimpse of the exhibition on the Taiping Heavenly Kingdom revolutionary movement.

The May 4th Movement, oil painting done in 1975.

Yuan Dynasty vase with stand made from Chun kiln, unearthed at Huhehot, Inner Mongolia, in 1970.

Deep blue vase with floral design in gold and swallow-shaped handles, made during the Chien Lung reign of the Ching Dynasty.



Detail of a handscroll *Prosperity in Soochow* painted by Hsu Yang in the 24th year of the Chien Lung reign. The scene illustrates commercial prosperity in Soochow, providing details of reference value for studying the beginnings of capitalism in China.

Jade seal of Heavenly King Hung Hsiu-chuan.

Chronological Table

Of Chinese History (Up to 1919)

PRIMITIVE SOCIETY	c. 1,000,000-4,000 years ago
SLAVE SOCIETY	c. 21st century-476 B.C.
Hsia	c. 21st-16th century B.C.
Shang	c. 16th-11th century B.C.
Western Chou	c. 11th century-771 B.C.
Spring and Autumn Period	770-476 B.C.
FEUDAL SOCIETY	475 B.C.-1840 A.D.
Warring States Period	475-221 B.C.
Chin	221-206 B.C.
Western Han	206 B.C.-24 A.D.
Eastern Han	25-220 A.D.
The Three Kingdoms	220-265 A.D.
Wei	220-265 A.D.
Shu	221-263 A.D.
Wu	222-280 A.D
Western Tsin	265-316 A.D.
Eastern Tsin	317-420 A.D.

Southern and Northern Dynasties	420-589 A.D.
Southern Dynasties	420-589 A.D.
Sung	420-479 A.D.
Chi	479-502 A.D.
Liang	502-557 A.D.
Chen	557-589 A.D.
Northern Dynasties	386-581 A.D.
Northern Wei	386-534 A.D.
Eastern Wei	534-550 A.D.
Western Wei	535-556 A.D.
Northern Chi	550-577 A.D.
Northern Chou	557-581 A.D.
Sui	581-618 A.D.
Tang	618-907 A.D.
Five Dynasties	907-960 A.D.
Liao	916-1125 A.D.
Sung	960-1279 A.D.
Northern Sung	960-1127 A.D.
Southern Sung	1127-1279 A.D.
Western Hsia	1038-1227 A.D.
Kin	1115-1234 A.D.
Yuan	1271-1368 A.D.
Ming	1368-1644 A.D.
Ching (Prior to the Opium War)	1644-1840 A.D.
SEMI-COLONIAL AND SEMI-FEUDAL SOCIETY (THE PERIOD OF OLD-DEMOCRATIC REVOLUTION)	1840-1919 A.D.

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